



TECHNICAL COMMISSION 25

"PARENTAL GUIDANCE"

ANNEX TO RECOMMANDATION "B.I.A.P. 25 - 01"

"Guidance for parents with children

with a hearing disorder, discipline by discipline"

- A. Role of the doctor
- B. Role of the psychologist
- C. Role of the speech therapist
- D. Role of the hearing-aid specialist
- E. Role of the social worker
- F. Role of the specialised teacher
- G. Role of experienced parents

A. ROLE OF THE DOCTOR IN PARENTAL GUIDANCE

The doctor must be specialised and skilled in diagnosis and follow-up of the child with a hearing impairment: E.N.T., speech therapist, audiophonologist ... He must have training in interview techniques. The audiophonologist takes responsibility for diagnosis and treatment in close collaboration with the professionals concerned and respecting their specific skills.

On announcing the diagnosis, he must:

- take the time necessary,
- present the truth tactfully and unambiguously,
- be ready to listen,
- provide information on deafness and its consequences,
- reassure the parents as to their own skills and the child's.

The diagnosis, once pronounced, must lead immediately to the start of care.

During the follow-up, he must :

- make a regular re-assessment of the child and his family, at frequent intervals during infancy,
- devote as much time as necessary to listening to the parents,
- organise complementary tests (etiological assessments...) and discuss the results with the family as well as with the caring team,
- be able to judge, in an interdisciplinary collaboration, the audiophonological therapeutic care of the child, the guidance given to the family, and deduce, together, any modifications to be made.
- inform the parents of new therapeutic possibilities and also inform the child, as his development permits,
- help the child to understand the reality of his hearing impairment.

Medical guidance continues into adulthood, at less frequent intervals as the child ages, with particular vigilance at certain delicate periods.

B. ROLE OF THE PSYCHOLOGIST IN PARENTAL GUIDANCE

Through complementary training, the psychologist must apprehend the problematic of childhood deafness.

If other professionals are dealing with parents' emotions, the presence of the psychologist and his clinical manner of speaking may be of use in transforming these emotions.

Parental guidance comprises :

- **indirect action** within the multidisciplinary team :
 - ~~des~~ on the emotional burden experience by the team,
 - ~~des~~ on the acceptance of the time necessary for each family to realise the child's specific needs.
 - ~~des~~ On the coherence of the educational planning for the child with family realities.

- **Direct action**, which means « management » of parents' emotions thanks to the time devoted by the psychologist to talking with them; this is when he can approach and deal with their expectations, their emotions and behaviour, all resulting from their child's deafness.

In this relationship, the psychologist must :

- listen to and encourage every possible form of personal expression giving vent to emotional build-up,
- take into account the parents' personality structure in their discussion on the child,
- allow parents to express transfers and counter-transfers,
- be aware of the risk arising from his own counter-transfer.

In every case, the psychologist's intervention is indicated as soon as the diagnosis has been pronounced and throughout the educational and therapeutic process.

The psychologist may find it appropriate to propose **psychotherapy** to the parents and consequently formulate a **contract** in the case of a significant change in the psycho-affective context concerning the parents.

Guidance means working with the parents on the **parent-child relationship** and seeks to improve it. This process is carried out through a psychologist-parent relationship in a positive mode, an **alliance**, based on trust. It concerns the real and imaginary « parent-child » **interactions**. It seeks for the meaning of parental attitudes. The psychologist can afford to respond to certain concrete demands from the parents and may adopt a "directive" attitude.

In therapy, on the other hand, the person asking for help seeks his own well-being; the family asking for help is trying to improve its way of functioning. The therapist is obliged to be **neutral** and his action takes place through a **patient-therapist transfer**.

The aim of this process of either guidance or therapy must be made **clear** by the psychologist and be **accepted** by the parents.

C. ROLE OF THE SPEECH THERAPIST IN PARENTAL GUIDANCE

The speech therapist is at the junction between the various parental guidance specialists.

- He must be able to direct the family to the appropriate partner in the multidisciplinary team.
- He must be able to appreciate and re-adapt the degree of assimilation by the parents of the information received.
- He must:
 - ~~✍~~ Help the parents with the reformulation and elaboration of a plan for their child,
 - ~~✍~~ Enable the parents to discover and fix objectives,
 - ~~✍~~ Give parents an awareness of the needs of their child as well as of the importance of their own role,
 - ~~✍~~ Propose to parents various means of communication and assistance in the development of a language that will facilitate the elaboration and appropriation of suitable linguistic models of interactions;

Beyond his specialisation in audiophonology, the speech therapist, thanks to his personal experience and practice, must be able to manage his own emotions. He must be able to accept, listen to, and sometimes channel those of the family.

Parental guidance should take place in a climate of trust, respecting the limits to the commitment of the family to the child's education and the time that can be devoted to this commitment.

D. ROLE OF THE HEARING-AID SPECIALIST IN PARENTAL GUIDANCE

The role of the hearing-aid specialist in parental guidance supposes a partnership. His function is to inform, to listen to and to provide diligent and attentive assistance. It is also to direct parents towards the other disciplines with which he collaborates.

He is an integral part of the audiophonological multidisciplinary team even if he works mainly in a different place.

The hearing-aid specialist must have:

- A good knowledge of the development of the child and of the hearing-impaired child,
- An awareness of the repercussions of deafness on the family system,
- training in the fitting of hearing-aids for the small child.

The message from the hearing-aid specialist must be clear and carefully detailed in order to:

- give its full importance to the hearing-aid,
- give parents a feeling of trust in the fitting while excluding the idea of the much wished-for miracle cure,
- emphasize that without the multidisciplinary back-up (especially speech therapy) the fitting of a hearing-aid alone will give poor results as regards to the child's potential.

The hearing-aid specialist must know how difficult it is for parents to integrate his information into a painful emotional context and how often it needs to be repeated.

His guidance role is particularly delicate in the case of training at an early age, progressive deafness or deep handicap.

E. ROLE OF THE SOCIAL WORKER IN PARENTAL GUIDANCE

Participation in guidance aims to create, for the hearing-impaired child and his family, **conditions favourable to their well-being:**

- "autonomy and development of each one's potentialities,
- mutual adaptation of the individual/changing society" (ANAS code of deontology – France).

The social worker has to make sure that the child and his family become actors in their own changing situation.

The social worker has a double function.

1. Within the family:

- ~~LES~~ To inform the parents of their rights and help them to claim and enjoy these rights without delay.
- ~~LES~~ To become a link between the family and the professionals in the multidisciplinary team, administrative bodies, employers and other social services.
- ~~LES~~ To pay very particular attention to deaf families, families of foreign extraction, socially disadvantaged families or those in precarious circumstances.
- ~~LES~~ To motivate families to continue as parents and active partners in their child's social integration plan.
- ~~LES~~ If necessary, to take on the task of prevention through educational guidance and home visits to the parents.

2. Within the multidisciplinary team:

- ~~LES~~ To make time for the essential discussion and sharing of information necessary for the co-ordination of individual action and the re-assessment of the plan.
- ~~LES~~ To make sure that the family is attended to and recognized in its way of life, with its own resources and limits.
- ~~LES~~ To direct his own guidance activity according to the respective contributions of each discipline.

Through parental accompaniment and the work of the multidisciplinary team, the social worker contributes to the recognition of the handicap by the family and by society as a whole, **always respecting the rights of the deaf person.**

F. ROLE OF THE SPECIALISED TEACHER IN PARENTAL GUIDANCE

The specialised teacher in hearing impairment must:

- ~~LES~~ Be highly aware of the repercussions of deafness on the family system.
- ~~LES~~ Know the caring team, even if it is at a distance, and maintain regular contact,
- ~~LES~~ respect the deontology applying to the medical and paramedical team.

The role of the specialised teacher in parental guidance consists of:

- **informing** the parents of the **educational plan** of the institution and of the class which will take the hearing-impaired pupil, which includes :

- ~~the~~ the means of communication to be used,
 - ~~the~~ the methods employed for language development,
 - ~~the~~ the general education objectives,
 - ~~the~~ the aims of schooling, the methods and means employed for achieving them ;
- **making sure** that the parental plan for the child **corresponds** to that of the institution and the class :
- **ensuring regular collaboration** between:
 - ~~the~~ the parents and himself
 - ~~the~~ the parents and the educational team as a whole,
 - ~~the~~ the parents and the caring team ;
- **ensuring** :
 - ~~the~~ **information** on the child's true educational progress, particularly on his learning advances,
 - ~~the~~ **consideration** of the most appropriate means of allowing the pupil to make progress in his schooling (individual support measures, remedial education, parental support, ...).

The specialised teacher is a member of the pluridisciplinary team and, as such, takes part in the orientation or re-orientation assessments of the hearing-impaired pupil.

He will supply the elements for educational evaluation:

- level achieved in learning activities,
- behaviour in the class group and in school life in general,
- behaviour towards school work.

These elements shall be taken into account for appropriate (re-)orientation of the pupil and passed on, considered and discussed with the parents within the parental guidance activity.

G. ROLE OF EXPERIENCED PARENTS IN PARENTAL GUIDANCE

Towards the hearing-impaired child's family, experienced and trained parents have an **original and complementary role** in parental guidance as provided by the professionals.

Having an earlier experience than that of the targeted parents and a certain distancing from their own child's handicap, experienced parents can **bring a message of realism and hope**.

They **host inter-family meetings** for :

- The sharing of expression
- The expression of feelings
- The exchange of information.

These meetings encourage **solidarity, distancing** from « wild » or fragmentary information coming from the entourage or the media, a more detailed **education** in problems of deafness and the **emergence of awareness** of the parental role.

Experienced parents **invite specialists** whose explanations, although similar to what the parents have already heard, are differently assimilated or understood thanks to the particular context of these meetings.

Experienced parents must be **accompanied** by psycho-social professionals in order to avoid any misunderstanding or drift.