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Forum

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ABOLISH THE RCD: A RESPONSE

As an RCD working in the State of Massachusetts, I would like to express my opinion regarding Mr. Curt Seider's letter to the Forum in the October issue of the *JRD*.

To "abandon the policy of having an RCD within DVR" would set rehabilitation services for deaf people back one hundred years! It has taken both Federal and State governments an exceedingly long time to recognize the unique needs and problems of deaf people. Ideally, a specialized commission similar to one for blind people would be preferable. However, with so many budgetary constraints, that may take some time in coming. Deaf people have only begun to learn how to lobby for their 'invisible disability'. Maybe the next ten years will demonstrate the results of those actions, i.e., in the establishment of specialized commissions and counseling and referral centers for deaf people.

In the meantime, we must have people trained in deafness in order to provide services equivalent to those that other disabilities receive. For years prior to the recruitment of RCD's, deaf people were consistently being 'lost between the cracks' if they were not an easy 'hearing aid rehab'. To place a general counselor on a deaf caseload would only serve to perpetuate that atrocity. Many deaf people not only have a different mode of communication than that of spoken English, they are also coming from a different background, both culturally and educationally. To lack the understanding of the psychodynamics involved in deafness is to truly lack an understanding of the deaf client's needs. The majority of rehab programs teach very little about the psychology and rehabilitation of deaf people. The majority of general caseload counselors have very little knowledge of the deaf community and certainly far less knowledge of how to communicate with them. If they do have deaf clients on their caseloads, they must utilize an interpreter in order to communicate. Needless to say, if given a choice, the deaf client would much prefer to communicate with the counselor on a one-to-one basis.

In the State of Massachusetts we are allowed to spend client service monies to purchase any service that is necessary in order for our client to achieve his/her vocational objective. That may involve anything from training with the utilization of interpreters to the purchase of a TTY or other physical restorative devices. Yes, this does involve a lot of case recording and paperwork, but isn't it worth it in order to provide services to the client in the most optimum way possible?

Mr. Seiders speaks about the need for more efficient use of time and money. Is not a general counselor hiring an interpreter for every meeting with the client a waste of time and money when the RCD can see the client alone? Is not the need to train in-house general counselors in sign language a waste of time and money when the RCD already possesses those skills and the necessary understanding of the needs of deaf people that go along with that?

I believe that deaf people deserve services equivalent to those of any other client of VR. In order to do that as maximally as possible, there must be a full-time RCD available. One who cannot only assist the deaf client better through the VR system, but one who can also reach out to the deaf community to help them understand what VR is. Many deaf people might benefit from VR services but remain unaware of what they actually are. I'd like to see the general counselor go to the local deaf club and try to explain that!

Sincerely,
Anita Braaf, Rehabilitation
Counselor for the Deaf
Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission

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In the January 1979 issue of the *Journal*, we listed the titles of projects completed by the National Leadership Training Program Area of the Deaf participants of 1976-77 and 1977-78. The response, in the form of requests for copies of the projects, indicates that the interest is such that the *Journal* is publishing the titles of projects completed by NLTP-D participants during 1978-79. We are adding to the listing projects completed by participants in the National Leadership Training Program Area of the Deaf-Blind. Further, we are including the names of project authors as a means of assisting in identification. Requests for copies should be sent to:

G. Earl Sanders, Administrator
NLTP, Center of Deafness
California State University, Northridge
Northridge, California 91330

1978-79 Authors and Project Titles-Area of the Deaf

- Alexander, Robert M., "College Preparatory Programs for Hearing Impaired Students at the Secondary Level"
- Azevedo, Margaret M., "An Assessment of Teacher Morale Among 'Deaf' and 'Hearing' Teachers of the Deaf"
- Billescas, Celia M., "Survey of Communication Methods and Problems of Spanish-Speaking Parents of Hearing Impaired Children"
- Bromley, Kathryn M., "When Hearing About It Is Hard: A Guide for the Hard of Hearing"
- Critchfield, A. Barry, "Family Relationships in a Severely Handicapped Deaf Population"
- Finneran, Michael R., "Suggestions for a Model Plan for a Deaf Community Service Agency: A Survey of Four Community Services in California"
- Goldstein, Sandra, "Dan Cloud and His Influence in Deaf Education"
- Hatch, Pamela J., "A Study of the Backgrounds and Some On-the-Job Environmental Factors of Hearing Impaired School Administrators"
- Heath, Linda R., "A Survey of Teachers of the Deaf and How They View Staff Development"
- Hilber, James G., "Services to Deaf-Blind Clients: A Survey and Recommendations for Services in the Metropolitan Salt Lake City Area"
- Jones, Janet L., "The National Leadership Training Program: A Media Presentation"
- Knudson, Bradley G., "Classroom Placement for Multiply Handicapped Hearing Impaired Persons"
- McDugald-Bruni, Katherine J., "Parent Education in California Public Day School Programs for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students"
- Moore, Sister Theresa, "A Handbook for Parents of Multiply Handicapped Deaf Children"
- Padden, Robert D., "The Role of the Residential School in Continuing Education"
- Robillard, John A., "A Model State Plan for Coordinated Services for the Hearing Impaired in the State of New Hampshire"

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Thorne, John G., "A Package of Materials Prepared On: An Application of Public Law 94-142; An Integrated Speech Program; and A Video Interview"

Tomikawa, Tetsuji, "Graduate Record Examination and Deaf Students"

1978-79 Authors and Project Titles-Area of the Deaf-Blind

Dayian, Chris C., "Advanced Technology for the Multihandicapped"

Furino, Diane, "Another Resource"

Jensen, Pamela, "A Rationale for the Development of Evaluation and Intervention Strategies for Presymbolic Play as a Cognitive Tool in Severely Handicapped Children"

Scott, Deborah, "Two Aspects of Sex Education Programs for Multiply Handicapped Low-Functioning Individuals"

Unawai, Alice, "Development of Field Trips for the Deaf-Blind/Severely Handicapped"