



## **Early Intervention and Cued Speech**

### *A Position Statement of the National Cued Speech Association*

Early access to communication and language is vital for developing emergent literacy skills. The National Cued Speech Association supports universal newborn hearing screening programs, as it is necessary for parents of children who are deaf or hard of hearing to learn how best to communicate with their child. The earlier appropriate visual communication is established, the sooner the language development process can begin.

Children diagnosed with hearing loss should receive services as requested from early interventionists, including audiologists, speech-language pathologists, developmental therapists, and/or teachers of the deaf trained in working with children who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Presenting unbiased information about Cued Speech as a visual communication option at the time the child's hearing loss is identified allows families the opportunity to learn how to cue and provide immediate and early visual access to English to their newborn child.

Parents/guardians and early intervention specialists should receive formal training and direct support in learning Cued Speech so that they can provide accurate and consistent cued language stimulation at all times, during both structured and unstructured learning opportunities.

A cued language environment from birth allows children identified as deaf or hard of hearing to more rapidly develop receptive and expressive language skills and establish a mental model of the spoken language used in the home, thus facilitating reading and writing skills development. Early use of Cued Speech also provides the multi-sensory information that children with identified auditory- or language-related disorders (e.g., auditory neuropathy, autism, Down syndrome, etc.) need in order to attain their maximum potential in language, speech and literacy.

Family Cued Speech camps (learning vacations) play a critical role in providing support to parents and professionals, as well as deaf and hard-of-hearing children. For families and professionals new to deafness and cueing, these camps act as a safe space and provide positive reinforcement. These camps also create environments in which cueing is the norm, allowing new cueers to communicate with others who cue.

*—Original Statement adopted 3-24-2006*

*—Revised Statement adopted 4-13-2007*