



Cued Speech and Literacy

A Position Statement of the National Cued Speech Association

Literacy is the ability to read and write proficiently, which allows one to understand and communicate ideas so as to participate in a literate society.

The primary purpose in developing Cued Speech was to create a visual system that would enable a person who is deaf or hard of hearing to become literate. We acknowledge that the ability to comprehend language is critical to an individual's quality of life and self-esteem. English language literacy provides access to educational options and career choices, as well as better employability, economic and social freedom.

Language and literacy go hand in hand. Ideally, the child's first language should be the parents' primary language(s). This allows for the natural acquisition of language and literacy skills.

The Cued Speech system enables people who are deaf or hard of hearing to visually absorb English, including its vocabulary, syntax, and phonemic structure. Consistent cueing in English increases communication, vocabulary, and language interaction between people who are hearing, deaf or hard of hearing. Thus, cueing provides visual access to the foundation necessary for proficiency in reading and writing.

Maximum attainment of language literacy depends on accurate and consistent cueing by family members and professionals. Cueing is most effective beginning at early identification of hearing loss and when the following occur:

- The family provides the individual who is deaf or hard of hearing with visual access to the language(s) and environmental sounds that others hear.
- A child's educational program is accessed through Cued Speech by teachers and service providers who are cueing all the time. If they do not cue, then a qualified cued language transliterator should be present. Transl iterators facilitate communication and learning, as well as provide access to auditory environmental information.

Cued Speech can be used in conjunction with aural/oral, auditory/verbal, and/or signing approaches. It can be used to develop literacy skills in children with a variety of learning needs.

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