

LITERACY

A Position Statement of the National Cued Speech Association

More than 90% of all deaf children have hearing parents; the following statements, endorsed by the National Cued Speech Association, focus on these children:

1. Literacy is a critical determiner of an individual's quality of life.
The ability to read and write is critical to an individual's quality of life, present and future. Literacy improves career options, employability, economic and social freedom, and self-esteem.
2. Literacy is the original and primary goal of Cued Speech use.
The primary goal of Cued Speech use is to enable the deaf person to become as literate as he/she would be without a hearing loss.

Cued Speech was created to enable deaf children to absorb the same phonemic/phonological language base as hearing children as a foundation for reading.

3. The most efficient route to literacy for a deaf individual is acquisition of the target spoken language (English, French, etc.).
The most efficient route to literacy for a deaf individual is to master the vocabulary and syntax of the target spoken language for reading.

If the deaf child has hearing parents, the target spoken language should be acquired as his/her first language. This does not rule out bilingualism.

4. Maximum attainment of literacy depends on conscientious use of Cued Speech by both family and professionals. Cued Speech is best used
 - (1) beginning at identification of hearing loss, and
 - (2) by all professionals directly involved in the child's educational program.

For maximum results:

- (1) Cued Speech is best begun upon identification of hearing loss. The goal of the family is to enable the hearing-impaired member to see the speech and environmental sounds that others hear.
 - (2) A deaf child's entire educational program can be presented with Cued Speech by either instructors and students cueing all the time and/or qualified Cued Speech interpreter/transliterators conveying the total sound environment. Occasional cueing is not effective.
 - (3) When providing support services, specialists (education, language, speech, audition, etc.) should be cued or a qualified Cued Speech transliterator should be present.
5. Cued Speech can be used in conjunction with aural/oral and/or signing approaches, but improvement in literacy is directly related to increasing exposure to the target spoken language through Cued Speech.
 6. Cued Speech is also effective in developing phonics and reading skills in hearing children and adults with and without special needs.

Adopted 7-22-90

BILINGUALISM

A Position Statement of the National Cued Speech Association

The National Cued Speech Association (NCSA) recognizes advantages in bilingualism in American Sign Language and written / spoken English as an option for most children in the United States who have a prelingual, severe-to-profound hearing impairment. We therefore affirm the following:

1. The language of the home should be the language of the parents.
2. A substantial command of the phonological system of English, its vocabulary and its syntax, is critically needed by the time of starting the elementary grades in school, as a base for reading and writing. The emphasis in preschool should therefore be on acquisition of English through Cued Speech.

If children of hearing parents are to become bilingual, they will need to be provided instruction and interaction in ASL, including opportunities for association with deaf role models. Experimentation will be required to determine when to start the second language.

3. NCSA regards Cued Speech as the most desirable vehicle for a severe-to-profoundly hearing-impaired child for acquisition of a verbal language and for clear communication in that language. The use of Cued Speech must be supplemented, however, by adequate and coordinated training in audition and speech production, if speech is to be a goal for the child.
4. Insofar as is possible, each language should be learned from persons who are good models of that language.
5. NCSA favors and invites a continuing dialogue on the subject of bilingualism with and among the various organizations concerned with hearing-impaired persons.

Adopted 7-22-90

Cued Speech: Applications, Inclusion, and Factual Accuracy

A Position Statement of the National Cued Speech Association

Cued Speech is a unique sound-based visual-communication system. More than a quarter-century old, it has been adapted to more than 50 languages and dialects and is in use in countries around the world. Research and experience have proven the benefits of Cued Speech use for people who are deaf or hard of hearing in the development of speechreading, speech, language and reading skills. Cued Speech is also being used to advantage with normally hearing persons with a wide variety of communication and learning needs, such as presenting phonics to beginning readers, teaching phonemes of other spoken languages to new learners, and assisting persons with learning disabilities, disfluencies in speech, auditory processing deficiencies, apraxia and other communication disorders. Therefore, the National Cued Speech Association encourages further research in these areas and asserts the following:

- (1) Information about Cued Speech belongs in any discussion or written material that presents communication options for those with speech, hearing, and language disabilities, including deafness.
- (2) Clients and families should not have to "stumble upon" Cued Speech, but receive the information at the same time they learn about other communication systems, educational approaches, assistive devices and augmentative communication forms. Clients and families deserve the opportunity to make informed choices and the respect of professionals in accepting those choices.
- (3) Information about Cued Speech should be balanced and factual. Accuracy is essential. Authors, lecturers, and others attempting to define Cued Speech can obtain guidelines for accurate definitions from the National Cued Speech Association.
- (4) Professionals need in-depth understanding of Cued Speech in order to explain it to clients and families. A 3-credit-hour course (45 - 50 hours) is recommended as a required offering of programs training professionals to serve those with speech, language, and hearing needs.

Adopted 11-4-90; Amended 3-14-93

The Deaf Child in the Family

A Position Statement of the National Cued Speech Association

The National Cued Speech Association asserts that:

- (1) Cued Speech was developed for use by hearing parents of deaf children to expedite the development of language and the achievement of literacy. Cued Speech enables the parents to build their deaf child's verbal language base at home.
- (2) Parents have the right to decide which language and culture should be passed on to their children. Parents are the most important factor in a child's nurturing and language development.
- (3) As with all children, deaf children want and need to be full participants in their family's language(s) and culture.
- (4) Parents have the right to choose to use Cued Speech, singly or in combination with other systems. That choice needs to be respected by all others, including those educating the child, other parents, and deaf adults. The freedom to make informed choices is essential.
- (5) Parents of deaf children are to be respected partners with professionals, and they should have full access to information and equal participation in decision-making.

Adopted 11-4-90

- (6) Parents have the responsibility of following through on their commitment to Cued Speech educational program in the school by cueing consistently as a family in all interactions with their child from the earliest possible age.

Adopted 11-3-91

Provision of Cued Speech Interpreters and Instruction in Institutions of Higher Learning

A Position Statement of the National Cued Speech Association

Cued Speech transliterators provide deaf clients access to the same auditory information available to hearing people in a shared environment. This concept of equal access to the environment of sound supports cultural and functional integration into the mainstream and is critical to the consistently high level of success experienced by deaf students who make use of Cued Speech.

Another effective access channel for deaf Cued Speech students is the teacher / instructor who uses Cued Speech. These teachers / instructors provide direct linguistic and curricular access to deaf Cued Speech students and, thereby, provide a foundation for their success.

Deaf people utilize a variety of systems for the purpose of communication. No one system is preferred by or inherent to all deaf people, nor is any one system a substitute for another. An appropriately designated interpreter / transliterator serves to maintain communicative continuity by utilizing a deaf person's chosen communication system. The interpreter / transliterator assures that the deaf person need not forego that system in order to understand or be understood.

Likewise, the instructor / teacher who uses Cued Speech maintains the integrity of the deaf Cued Speech student's chosen system of communication. To stipulate that a deaf person forego his/her chosen communication system, as provided by appropriately designated interpreters / transliterators or instructors / teachers, deprives him/her of equal access and profoundly limits his/her opportunities.

Therefore, toward providing equitable opportunities for all deaf people, regardless of their chosen system of communication, the National Cued Speech Association asserts that institutions of higher learning should offer Cued Speech transliterating / interpreting services and/or direct instruction through Cued Speech for students who request it.

Adopted 8-5-91

Cued Speech and Cochlear Implants

A Position Statement of the National Cued Speech Association

The position of the National Cued Speech Association is to support literacy and language development through the use of Cued Speech.

The rapidly advancing technology of the cochlear implant brings to many the significantly increased hearing necessary to auditorily process oral speech and language. Cued Speech facilitates that process and serves as a communication tool to be used with the cochlear implant to:

1. Visually clarify and confirm what is being processed auditorily through the cochlear implant.
2. Attach meaning to new auditory information and to the speech sound system of spoken language (phonology).
3. Facilitate and accelerate new language development including vocabulary, grammatical structures, and idiomatic expressions.
4. Provide an unambiguous message when there is competing or background noise, when the implant is not in use, or when the implant user is at a distance from the speaker.
5. Provide continuity among professionals when teaching articulation skills.

The National Cued Speech Association recognizes that:

1. The child needs daily opportunities to use and learn language and speech skills in auditory only (unisensory) situations.
2. The decision to implant a child with a significant hearing loss requires parental choice with an understanding of the risks and benefits involved.
3. The parent needs reliable information about evaluations and recommendations by experienced medical and educational professionals as well as parental feedback

The National Cued Speech Association believes that:

1. the parent and school district must commit to provide the necessary habilitation and appropriate educational program for the child after implantation, and
2. in order for the child to obtain maximum long-term educational and linguistic benefit, accurate and fluent Cued Speech should be used in conjunction with the cochlear implant.

The National Cued Speech Association supports the rights of children and parents to continue to use their preferred mode of communication both at home and in educational settings after implantation.

Adopted July 31, 2003