Cued Speech and the Deaf Child in the Hearing Family
A Position Statement of the National Cued Speech Association

The National Cued Speech Association (NCSA) believes parents are the best language models for children. Approximately 90 percent of children who are deaf or hard of hearing are born to hearing parents. In order for the child who is deaf or hard of hearing to be fully included in the family, s/he must have full access to the parents’ primary language(s).

The NCSA believes that parents who consistently use a cued language provide the child who is deaf or hard of hearing with full access to communication and language(s) in the home, and therefore, full inclusion in family activities.

Cueing enables hearing parents to quickly learn to express their native language visually and then build upon their child’s language base at home. As with all children, those who are deaf or hard of hearing want and need to be full participants in their family’s language(s) and culture(s). Cued Speech was developed for use by all parents, hearing and deaf, of children who are deaf and hard of hearing to expedite the development of English language skills. These skills are needed to establish a strong foundation for academic literacy.

Children of hearing parents should also be provided with opportunities for interacting with deaf role models who use varied modes of communication. The exposure of role models who are deaf and hard of hearing is crucial to not only a child’s potential success, but also his/her well-being and self-esteem.

The NCSA asserts that parents have the right to decide the mode of communication used to convey their own language(s) and culture(s) to their children. Parents also have the right to use Cued Speech, singly or in combination with other modes of communication. As parents are the most important factor in a child’s nurturing as well as in their language development, the parents’ choices need to be respected. The freedom to make informed choices is essential, and educational professionals, other parents, and deaf and hard of hearing people need to recognize and respect those choices.

The NCSA also asserts that parents have the responsibility of following through on their commitment to Cued Speech by cueing accurately and consistently as a family in all interactions with their child. Parents also have a responsibility to ensure that family members who are deaf or hard of hearing have access to communication during any activity or gathering.

—Original Statement adopted 11-4-1990
—Revised Statement adopted 4-14-2007