

POSITION STATEMENT

TITLE: PARENTS ACCESS TO INFORMATION

ISSUE:

Parents of children who are Deaf or have a hearing impairment do not always have access to the information they need to make an informed decision regarding their child's schooling.

In order for parents to make an informed choice of schooling for their children it is essential that they should have all options explained to them clearly and in a non-biased way.

An Australian Hearing publication "Choices" is available in most States and Territories. It provides information regarding curricula at various schools. It is essential that this, or some other publication, provide comprehensive details of all curricula, facilities and philosophies of all schools (both mainstream and special).

It is equally essential that all parents of all children who are Deaf or have a hearing impairment be assured of access to that publication and receive non-biased advice from qualified persons (and other parents of similar children) to assist them make an informed choice for their children. It is essential that advice not be biased whether it is provided by education authorities, medical authorities, deafness sector organisations, other parents, or anyone else.

It is equally essential that no parent be criticised for the choice they make and be given all possible support to ensure their choice works for the child. If a parent wishes to change their previous choice, that should also be informed and then supported.

The rights of the child to participate in their own choice of schooling are also very important, particularly for teenagers.

POSITION:

That all education authorities and centre-based programs provide parents of children who are Deaf or hearing impaired with non-biased advice and services.

That all medical authorities and deafness sector organisations provide non-biased advice to parents regarding education options for Deaf or hearing impaired children.

COSTS OF POSITION: No costing has been undertaken.

RESEARCH BASIS: Further research is being undertaken into overseas models of information provision.



POLICY APPROVED: Board - 29 October 2000.

POLICY REVIEWED OR REVISED: Board - October 2001, 23 March 2002, 20 October 2002, and 25 October 2004.

DATE OF NEXT SCHEDULED REVIEW: No further review currently scheduled.