

Libraries in Schools for Special Education

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Abstract:

Today everyone realize the importance, the pivotal place and the many functions of school libraries. More means are put at the disposal of these libraries as a result of this acknowledgement. The staff are called upon to improve their professional qualifications and supplement their knowledge in the field of librarianship, etc. This is however not the situation in the libraries of schools for special education. At these institutions, where the task of the library is infinitely greater than at regular schools, where the "potential clients" are students needing **more** help and adaptation of learning aids and tools; where preparation for the life lying ahead of them is so critical – precisely there the libraries play a very minor part in the life of the schools.

It appears from the survey, that as the school is smaller, its library has less books and less enrichment activities. It also appears that very few librarians are employed – most directors of school libraries are teachers who have no professional education in the field of librarianship. This is because of a lack of understanding of the importance of the possible advantages that could accrue therefrom.

The libraries are meant to be used mainly by pupils and teachers. No connection was found between the disablement and the size of the library, its contents and the kind of activities it offers. Its existence and its contents are not a function of educational needs, but are dictated by financial reason and lack of understanding.

However, we found that there is a readiness for future expansion of the school library and a willingness to use special academic consultant. Today, it is possible to adapt technology for disabled people. This can afford them more

independence and satisfaction and also partially bridge their disabilities and will bring them closer to the achievements of their peers.

Today, in the wake of the great development of technology and the emotional support given by bibliotherapy, the library in the school for special education can play a more active role in meeting the needs of the "special" child, his parents and his teachers.

In the course of this work we shall propose a model for a library / resource center at a school for special education; a library that will constitute the **heart** of the school – just as it is supposed to do in regular schools.

In addition to this however, the library / resource center has other specialized functions to fulfill. It should be a center concentrating and providing scientific and professional information in the field of disablement the children attached to the school suffer from, but also popular medical knowledge – adapted to the educational level of parents, family members and those attending to the childrens' needs.

The library should be equipped with learning aid, audiovisual materials, special games and suitable literature tailored to the needs of the particular handicap. Supplementary training will be conducted making use of various materials found in the library. All of the above should be accompanied by continuing education (training and assistance), enabling the families to better cope on daily basis.

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