

FOSTERING INCLUSION, SUPPORTING PEOPLE, ADVANCING IN SOLIDARITY

**International Day of the Deaf 2015
26 September**

FIAPAS MANIFESTO

LET'S TALK

On the occasion of the International Day of the Deaf, the Spanish Confederation of Families of Deaf People - FIAPAS would like to share with Society an image of deaf people overcoming difficulties which comes about by placing the necessary resources within their reach. It is an image which demonstrates that everyone's efforts are worth it, that advances have been made and that this progress is not intangible but something that can - and should - be taken on board in daily life to improve quality of life and to exercise rights in an environment that raises invisible barriers.

Thanks to the scientific and technological progress that has been made in the last two decades, we find deaf children and young people who have been diagnosed early, have had speech therapy and prostheses at an early age and, as a result, have had the opportunity to access the oral language naturally in their first years of life, achieving personal and social development which manifests itself in high levels of educational inclusion,

We are, therefore, talking about deaf boys, girls and young people who communicate orally, use hearing prostheses (hearing aids and implants) and hearing and oral communication support products (FM systems, magnetic loops and sub-titles) which make their education on equal terms with the other students possible.

However, this evolution must be recognised and taken on board by the government, public authorities and the professionals involved so that the educational needs of school age deaf children, which arise from these new circumstances, are suitably identified. There must also be sufficient, appropriate resources available to respond to these needs. This is the only way that it will be possible to offer inclusive, quality education in interactive situations with access to the information and knowledge imparted within the school environment.

In fact, without hearing and oral communication support resources, if the provisions of the current legal framework are not applied, if there is no demonstration of the political and social will needed to implement and use these resources and greater awareness is not promoted, all the progress made will be compromised.

Therefore, **FIAPAS CALLS FOR:**

- early detection of educational needs directed at **early access to linguistic skills in the environment´s oral language**
- **up to date training for teachers and speech therapists** aimed at training them to develop these linguistic skills, both spoken and written, in deaf students
- **oral communication support products: FM systems, magnetic loops and sub-titles**
- **support for families: financial help to meet the higher costs associated with disability, such as access to hearing prostheses and their maintenance, speech therapy and technical help, etc.**

LET THE WHOLE WORLD HEAR IT... **FIAPAS IS COMMITTED, HOW ABOUT YOU?**

- In Spain there are more than one million people with impaired hearing, 97% of them communicate in oral language (INE, 2008)
- Five out of every thousand children are born with various types and levels of deafness, which means that, each year, there are 2,500 more families with a deaf child
- 93% of deaf children and adolescents study in an inclusive environment
- More than 94% of families with deaf children chose a school based on the fact that there are support teachers and speech therapists