

Assessment and
Programming for
Young Children with
Low-Incidence Handicaps

Assessment and Programming for Young Children with Low-Incidence Handicaps

Edited by

CECIL R. REYNOLDS

*Texas A&M University
College Station, Texas*

and

JULIA H. CLARK

*University of Nebraska
Lincoln, Nebraska*

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PREFACE

The public schools have taken on increasing responsibility over the last decade for providing in-school educational services to children with low-incidence handicaps, children who, not very many years ago, would have been relegated to custodial care or limited to care only in the home. With the increasing responsibility for educating these children has come recognition that few of us have the requisite knowledge or skills to deliver high-quality services to these children. University programs are providing more staff, but the existing staff must also be trained. We have been involved for several years, with the special education branch of the Nebraska Department of Education in the provision of in-service training in the early identification and assessment of handicapping conditions, when we realized an even greater need for training regular classroom teachers, administrators, and psychologists in addition to early childhood special education personnel about the nature of low-incidence handicaps and how they might be dealt with in the public school setting. Knowing the enormity and the expense of such an undertaking, we tenuously approached the State Department. They too were cognizant of this need and welcomed our ideas.

Jan Thelen and her capable staff then took to coordinating the planning with us and the Nebraska Department of Education provided the fundings. The Nebraska National Conference on Assessment and Programming for Infants, Preschool, and School Age Children with Low-Incidence Handicaps was one major result of this planning and coordination. The Conference was held in June of 1982, and was highly successful, so much so that many people had to be turned away.

This volume represents a collection and revision of the major presentations of the conference, dealing with those issues we felt most central to educators. Not all areas could possibly be addressed and some arbitrary and logistical decisions eliminated otherwise desirous areas of concern. This book represents what is currently happening and what is available with regard to assessment and programming for low-incidence handicaps, aimed specifically at the public school arena, all positions being presented by nationally recognized scholars whom we were lucky to attract.

We cannot begin to convey our appreciation to the cosponsors of the conference, the Special Education Branch of the Nebraska Department of Education, Nebraska School for the Deaf, Nebraska School for the Blind, and also the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Barkeley Memorial Center. Jan Thelen and her staff were most helpful in the design of the conference and contributed much to its substantive success. Dr. Robert Stepp, Director of the Barkeley Memorial Center, gallantly provided the staff of accomplished secretarial, accounting, audio-visual, and logistical wizards who kept the conference running smoothly. To Cliff, Dick, Evelyn, and Wendy our gracious thanks for making the conference so easy on the rest of us.

The various scholars and practitioners who came to impart this knowledge and skills were of course central to success not only with the conference but with the writing of this volume. We can only repay our debt to you by seeing that your work is brought to the attention of those in a position to use it to help the children, for that is what we are all about. To Karlease Kelly who put up with our idiosyncracies and retyped the manuscript more than we had a right to expect -- you are a gem. Thank you.

We can only hope now that you will learn from the work of these dedicated people as we have and continue to grow and learn as you work with this population of children -- a job at once frustrating and immensely rewarding.

February, 1983

Cecil R. Reynolds
Julia H. Clark

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