

Title:

Good practice in rehabilitation of children - what, where and to whom?

Authors:

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Objective:

Specialists and societies were asked how to define and find a good practice for rehabilitation of children. What is important, what is to be done first, what is the role of families and - most difficult - how to get the professionals agree upon the goal.

Methods: The subjects consisted of 15 local groups of rehabilitation specialists all over Finland and six national societies. The specialists represent health and social care, education, day care and families of children with special needs. Over the years 2002 - 2005 group discussions (Delphi) were used, creating a consensus on ethical values and framework of past, present and future. The results are integrated according to the ICF model and priority is given to everyday activities.

Results and conclusions:

- 1) The starting point for rehabilitation is informed consent of family. This means that they get a thorough information of the rehabilitation plan and accept it. Commitment to rehabilitation plan is based on discussion, honesty and trust. All activity must happen in an atmosphere of mutual agreement.
- 2) To attain this, there must be a local framework which consists of a general plan and agreement how rehabilitation and other special services are arranged in this community. Everybody must take part to the planning of such framework and everybody must comply with the framework when it comes to practice. This is the means to prevent delays, ineffectiveness and false promises.
- 3) The theoretical basis of the local framework rests on numerous sources of information and guidance. Rehabilitation and other special services (education, social life) are highly skilled tasks which should however be carried out as near the everyday life of the child and family as possible. The framework must find the balance between the demands of special skills and everyday life and remember that the child lives in the latter.
- 4) The local framework forms the basis for individual planning, but does not replace it. Vice versa, individual planning is necessary, but cannot be free, it must comply with the framework. On its part, the framework cannot be normative or restrictive, its purpose is to make the individual planning quick and easy and - paradoxically - to preserve its individual character.

Local projects are needed to test these guidelines and suggestions and how to arrange the rehabilitation system in practice.