



## **Neurological Reorganization the Delacato Therapy Its Evolution and Relevance Today**

### **Abstract**

**The Delacato therapy model for the treatment of brain injured individuals, and those whose neurological organization in some way has been interrupted, has come a long way since Carl Delacato wrote and published his first book “The Treatment and Prevention of Reading Problems” in 1959, when he was Associate Director and co-founder of The Institutes for the Achievement of Human Potential, working with Temple Fay, Glen and Robert Doman. Along the way, his primary interest in the problems of Speech and Reading, the diagnosis, treatment and prevention of such, during his time at the Institutes, led to a number of books being written on the subject. [1,2,3,4,5] .**

**In 1972, after leaving the Institutes to concentrate on specializing in Autistic Children, Delacato [6] proposed a new theory of Autism and its treatment in his book in 1974 “The Ultimate Stranger –The Autistic Child”**

**Since the publication of this book, his work has led to the evolution and publication of similar models of his original concepts by other authors, resulting in the reinforcement of his work, and confirmation that his ground breaking work from the 1950’s up to the mid 1970’s, had relevancy for the treatment of neurologically dysfunctional and sensory impaired children, whose condition was as a result of a mild diffuse brain Injury or interrupted neurological organization.**

In 1968, and again reproduced in 1982 and 1999 [7], the American Academy of Pediatrics published a paper in the journal Pediatrics, criticizing the Doman Delacato therapy.

In April 1968, The National Association for Retarded Children (NARC) [8] joined with other organizations in stating that, advocates of sensorimotor training were under an obligation to provide data and experimental investigations, supporting the effectiveness of their treatment techniques. This obligation was met, and the generally favorable results of the NARC experimental study, and the strong endorsements of respondents to its parent survey, warranted the conclusion, that the sensorimotor training methods investigated, should be recognized as one legitimate approach in the remediation of handicapping conditions with appropriate subjects. The positive findings offered a basis for concluding, that there was a beneficial result to be associated with the particular programme studied beyond what might be expected on the basis of maturation, or a programmed of attention and physical activity.

---

### **Delacato Centre UK**

Principal Facility: 26 Gwscwm Park, Burry Port, Llanelli, Carmar. SA16 0DX, UK  
Tel: +44 (0)1554 834951 / Email: robin.burn@delacato.co.uk



These findings were published in Mental Retardation [9] in June 1973 .In 1975 another randomized study and control trial [10], came to similar conclusions.

In spite of these published positive conclusions the AAP continued to reproduce its original critical 1968 statement in 1982 and 1999, without taking into consideration Delacato publications after 1968. [11]

From 1972, a number of Delacato Clinics were set up around the world, in Israel in 1972, Germany in 1976, Italy in 1976, Japan in 1982, the United Kingdom in 1996, the German, Italian, and United Kingdom clinics are currently attended by David Delacato. The works of Delacato have been translated in eight important languages giving the opportunity for readership around the world.

After the publication by Delacato of his research documents and his books, from the 1950's through the 1960's, in the years following, a number of authors produced volumes, influenced by his ideas, leading to the setting up of therapy practice's, for example Sensory Integration Therapy, (Ayres, 1979) [12] and now, Brain Gym (Dr Paul Dennison) is advocated for today's school children around the United Kingdom, and occupational therapy is standard practice in our modern health systems around the world .

The availability of high definition scanners are now confirming the original concepts propounded by Delacato that impairment is a result of mild diffuse brain injury, by finding anomalies in the brain. A recent study into individuals who stammered, using high definition brain scanners, found anomalies in the left hand cortex [13] and in their letter to the Editor in 1994, [14] Delacato (D), Szegda, and Parisi cite various published reports which lend weight as significant corroborative evidence of Delacato's physiological theory of Autism.

Today, therapists, and those practitioners working with neurologically dysfunctional and sensory impaired children, use practices, that evolved directly from the Delacato research of the 1950's and 1960's, and as such bear witness to their modern day use based on original Delacato theories. The current Delacato Clinics, the practitioners of Delacato Therapy, continue to evolve the original ideas, evaluating and incorporating the latest neurological findings, and adapting the therapies accordingly to meet today's requirements.



## References

- 1 Delacato CH: The Treatment and Prevention of Reading Problems (1959)
- 2 Delacato CH: The Diagnosis and Treatment of Speech and Reading Problems (1963)
- 3 Delacato CH: The Elementary school of the Future (1965)
- 4 Delacato CH: Neurological Organization and Reading (1966)
- 5 Delacato CH: A New Start for the Child with Reading Problems (1970)
- 6 Delacato CH: The Ultimate Stranger the Autistic Child (1974)
- 7 The Treatment of Neurologically Impaired Children Using Patterning, American Academy of Pediatrics, and Committee on Children with Disabilities: Pediatrics 1999; Vol 104, No 5: 1149-1151.
- 8 Final Report, Sensori-motor Training Project; National Association for Retarded Children; June 1973
- 9 Mental Retardation; National Association for Retarded Children: Vol 22; No 3; June 1973
- 10 Neman, Roos, McCann, Menolascino, Heal; American Journal of Mental Deficiency; 79 (4): 372-84; Jan 1975
- 11 Policy Statement Re. AAP; Delacato Centre UK Dec 2003 [www.delacato.co.uk](http://www.delacato.co.uk)
- 12 Sensory Integration Therapy; Dr Jean Ayres 1979
- 13 Sommer et Al; the Lancet: Vol 360; August 3<sup>rd</sup> 2002
- 14 Delacato, Szegda, Parisi. Dev Brain Dysfunction 1994; 7: 129-131

Robin Burn  
Director  
Delacato Centre UK  
March 2004