Royal Dutch Kentalis

Bridging communication barriers
Royal Dutch Kentalis is a national organization in the Netherlands, specialized in providing diagnostic, care and education to persons who are deaf, hard-of-hearing or deafblind, and to those who have a language impairment. Our knowledge and expertise is focused on bridging communication barriers. We train not only our own staff, but are also pleased to share our expertise with all professionals who are interested, worldwide.

Vision
In line with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), Royal Dutch Kentalis works from the conviction that – regardless of any disability - every person is entitled to quality education and participation in social, economic, political and cultural life in his/her best accessible language.

Facts and figures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clients</td>
<td>7,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pupils</td>
<td>7,200</td>
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<tr>
<td>Audiology patients</td>
<td>15,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>4,700</td>
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<tr>
<td>20 schools for Special Education</td>
<td>(approx. 35 locations)</td>
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<tr>
<td>80 care- and diagnostic locations</td>
<td></td>
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<td>6 Audiological centers</td>
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Partners worldwide

At the Kentalis Academy you may find our latest research results, publications and teaching materials, training courses and events.

Kentalis International Foundation is the international project office. We contribute to the mission of Royal Dutch Kentalis by engaging our professionals in international exchange in order to share our expertise. We offer short term, tailor-made staff training, combining both theoretical knowledge and practical skills. In Tanzania and Uganda we share our knowledge through long-running programs, engaging together with partners in systemic change initiatives.

Mission
To give people - in the Netherlands and far beyond - for whom the ability to hear or communicate is not a matter of course, the best and most appropriate access to up-to-date language and communication facilities, with the aim of maximizing their ability to participate in society.

Care Education Diagnostics

At Kentalis, one finds a unique combination of theory and practice. We combine academic and applied research, staff training and hands-on practical experience. All under one roof, enabling mutual continuous learning and creating space for innovation.

History
Royal Dutch Kentalis has a more than 225 year history. On April 14th in 1790, the Walloon Reverend Henri Daniel Guyot took the initiative to start teaching deaf children in Groningen. He started out with a classroom of 14 students. After this, more pioneers started schools for the deaf. Together, these pioneers laid the foundation for the present-day Kentalis.
Increase knowledge…

through research

Through applied research, we can bridge the gap between research and practice. New methods and techniques for care services and education are developed. The interaction between the child and its educational and social environment is at the center of attention. And thus, as an example, we keep searching for accessible forms of communication, language and literacy for people who have limited access to spoken language.
Teaching deaf and hard-of-hearing children

Teaching deaf and hard-of-hearing children, how do you do that? A great deal of scientific knowledge is available, but is unknown to many teachers. And even if you are aware, how do you apply it in your own classroom? This is the focus of the ‘Reading Project’: spreading available knowledge, and in particular, sharing how to apply this knowledge in practice.

E-learning for teachers

The Reading project was initiated by the teachers of one of the Kentalis schools. They wanted to improve teachers’ skills in reading instruction. During the project, it turned out that merely providing a report and a DVD on best practices in reading instruction was not enough to improve the teachers’ skills in this area. Video coaching in the classroom did show positive results in the application of reading instructions in the classroom.

“These results convinced us to develop two e-learning modules on the subject of reading development in deaf and hard-of-hearing children. One for teachers in which videos and assignments help them in incorporating the teaching strategies in their classroom. The other one for reading experts who learn to coach the teachers in their reading instruction.”

Expanding reading method

Through our international department, we are sharing our knowledge. The results and lessons learned from our research in the Netherlands is being used in our international work, where we will make the first steps in developing deaf specific teaching methods. Therefore an International Reading project has started in Uganda and Tanzania.

Loes Wauters, researcher Kentalis Academy, and co-author of the book Bilingualism and Bilingual Deaf Education

‘Videos and assignments help them in incorporating the teaching strategies in their classroom’
Increase knowledge…

through exchange

Knowledge exchange inspires today’s education and care and enhances the quality of our services. We enjoy sharing best practices with our partners, learn from their experiences and research, and work on common solutions to emerging challenges.
Together in CHARGE

Children with CHARGE syndrome experience multi-sensory impairment in its most extreme form. Due to the low incidence of this syndrome and the high variety in level of functioning of the child, it is challenging to share experiences and identify and describe the child's specific needs in educational programs. In the project ‘Together in CHARGE’ a Dutch-German network was formed of educational professionals, such as teachers, psychologists and therapists. Also, more knowledge was gained about how to address the specific needs of these children. Erasmus plus supports the project.

Sharing experiences

Dutch professionals were warmly welcomed by their German colleagues who opened their classroom doors to them. A guideline based on the work of Gail Deuce was used during job shadowing. In other activities, experiences from different cases of both countries were discussed with focus on the specific needs related to CHARGE syndrome. Knowledge about infrastructure and treatment was exchanged in meetings with managers and therapists respectively.

Findings

The project yields interesting points for attention, we highlight the following. In seeking for educational strategies, it is helpful to take account of 7 domains (Deuce, 2017). In the domain communication, for example, it seems obvious for the teacher to wait for a child’s response. But in practice it is difficult to determine from overt behavior when the child is ready for the next step. Stable body positions and balance were two main features during observation and in the case studies clarifying which cues are important to look for in conversations and actions. Also, a multi-disciplinary approach is crucial to point out learning opportunities that seem out of reach.

A final report with more findings and recommendations for practice is planned.

Marga Martens, project leader and researcher at Kentalis

‘I’m inspired by this exchange with our European partner. We could apply our new insights directly into practice.’
Disclose knowledge… through translating

Kentalis International operates as a knowledge broker, linking the expertise of Royal Dutch Kentalis to the specific needs of (future) project partners. Kentalis International works on translating this specific knowledge into programs which can be used in different cultural contexts.
E-learning Audiology

Proper language development and quality education for children with hearing loss starts with early identification, followed by early intervention. Investing in awareness raising and capacity building are the most effective interventions for a sustainable change. In the majority of developing countries there are only a few trained audiological professionals for the diagnosis and treatment of hearing problems. The Kentalis E-Learning audiology courses support these professionals and help them with the training of new hearing professionals.

Training packages
The E-Learning program “Basic Audiology” is an entry level course which relates hearing problems to the effects on communication and language development. It also shows the important role of parents. This course targets a large group of both parents and professionals who want to know more about hearing impairment and its impact. This is a full online course and can be started without any prior knowledge of the subject. After completion participants will be awarded with a certificate.

Kentalis also offers a training package for a diploma course “Hearing Care Technician”. This is a blended learning course, taught by local professionals. In the package Kentalis supplies and maintains the online environment. Through the train-the-trainer method local professionals are trained in teaching the course. Materials, such as PowerPoints, video clips and assessment sheets will be provided. This course aims at setting an international quality standard for Hearing Care Technicians. The local lecturers can now focus on the practical skills and thus work more efficient with a group of students.

The quality of the training materials is certified by CPD Certification Services UK.

Fred Marinus, project manager Kentalis International

‘A successful training has already been established at the Ugandan Institute for Allied Health and Management’
Disclose knowledge… through accessibility

We make our knowledge and skills accessible through academic research literature, masterclasses, blended learning courses and train-the-trainer programs. Our own staff in special needs education, inclusive education, early childhood services, diagnostic centers and vocational training programs benefit from the training we provide. We are happy to share and exchange knowledge as well with professionals worldwide.
Practical application of bundled expertise on deafblindness

Capture parents’ and professionals’ expertise on deafblindness in scientific practice and make it available to everyone worldwide who is involved in the care and education of deafblind people. This way, we can optimally encourage the communication-development possibilities in deafblind people, both under parental and caregivers’ guidance. This was the goal of the project ‘Communication and congenital deafblindness’. “We have been applying this expertise at the Kentalis school Rafael and we hardly see any difficult behavior anymore”, says teacher and co-writer Marijke Bolwerk.

Communication with deafblind people is characterized by a great deal of one-on-one contact. Much knowledge, therefore, can be found in the heads of caregivers. The desire grew to bundle this knowledge and capture it in a scientific practice series of book, accompanied by video material of good practices.

Inger Rødbroe (The Resource Centre of Congenital Deafblindness, Denmark) has shaped this project from her knowledge and expertise in this area, in cooperation with Marleen Janssen (University of Groningen, The Netherlands) and Jacques Souriau (CRESAM, France). Together with professionals from Denmark, Finland, Sweden, Norway, Iceland, France and the Netherlands, they bundled their expertise. This happened, amongst others, via working conferences in which the writers worked out specific themes.

Theory and practice
In the booklets, a large number of aspects regarding communication with deafblind people are addressed. The written theory is illustrated by means of video-recordings; each booklet contains a DVD. At Rafael, the theory from the booklets has been translated to the working practice by means of a professionalization trajectory. All employees are now able to apply this. “This yields its results”, notes Bolwerk.

Masterclasses
Marleen Janssen, Professor in Deafblindness at the Groningen University and connected to Kentalis, has contributed significantly to the booklets. Under her guidance, doctoral research is performed into deafblindness. The new insights that come from this research with regard to the booklets’ themes, are translated to the daily working practice by means of masterclasses.
Transmit knowledge...

to external parties

Kentalis ensures top quality in training and education: a partner can count on our commitment to deliver the best suitable method embedded in the specific learning context. We develop and deliver the programs together with our partners in order to assure best results and sustainable knowledge transfer.

Our staff is well-trained and specialized in facilitating in-service training courses. But also external parties can subscribe to our training courses. We work closely with partners in the Netherlands and abroad in mutual research projects. Kentalis aims to improve the quality of service delivery in a sustainable manner: in dialogue with its clients, staff members and partners.
Deaf, hard-of-hearing and hearing children go to school together

Hearing and deaf or hard-of-hearing children attend a (regular) school together. This is called co-enrollment, an interesting example of inclusive education: an intensive way of cooperation between regular and special education, where knowledge is shared both ways. “I saw this abroad and was inspired immediately. It offers the best of both worlds.”

Co-teaching
Deaf and hard-of-hearing students are being taught in groups, together with hearing students. Teachers from both schools teach the classes, as co-teachers. In addition, a sign language teacher, a speech-language therapist and a deaf teacher-assistant are involved. In the classroom, attention is being paid to the individual strengths and weaknesses of each single student. Sign language is offered and there is time to share experiences regarding being a deaf student in mainstream education.

Better results
What has it yielded so far? Positive results regarding learning and social development. And satisfied parents of all students. The teachers from special education have learned more about specific aspects of mainstream education, such as the pace of instruction and classroom management. Teachers in regular schools have become more knowledgeable about being deaf or hard-of-hearing, the educational implications and the teaching of these students.

Annet de Klerk, director Kentalis School Talent

‘Co-enrollment offers the best of two worlds’
Transmit knowledge... via the train-the-trainers principle

In order to achieve sustainable results, Kentalis International works with the train-the-trainer principle. Our staff is dispatched to projects abroad, where they use their specific knowledge within the local context of the partner country. This allows for sustainable transfer of expertise. Our experts transfer their knowledge through the training of professionals working in universities, colleges, schools or NGOs. They, in turn, will train colleagues who can directly apply the acquired knowledge in their contact with learners – parents, professionals and deaf and hard-of-hearing students themselves.
Parental Awareness Workshops

The CPD certificated Awareness workshop for parents aims to empower parents by offering them information and knowledge on the causes of deafness, how to interact and communicate with the child and their rights. It gives parents a perspective on their child’s future because educated Deaf role models are the facilitators of these workshops.

Method
Via the Training–of-Trainers principle, Kentalis teaches future trainers how to educate community facilitators to offer workshops to parents of deaf children. Knowledge will be secured in a long lasting and sustainable way, because these trainers can continue training new community facilitators, who are close to the parents. Before the parental workshop will start, the community is sensitized and the topic is introduced by a mini-seminar for key figures in the community.

Impact and outcomes of the workshop
After the workshop parents are able to understand their child’s deafness better and know how to interact with their child. It becomes easier to involve the child in family and community life. Parents are able to make informed choices on interaction, communication and enrollment in school. Parents become empowered and can share their knowledge with the community. Better understanding about deafness, better interaction between parents and child will increase the child’s quality of life, the child will be less vulnerable. By experiencing educated Deaf role models the parents are more likely to invest in their child’s education and enroll the child in school.

Marianne Maas, program officer Kentalis Academy

‘It gives parents a perspective on their child’s future because educated Deaf role models are the facilitators of these workshops’