

reporting to parents; he or she will also consult with parents on any matters regarding their child which arises in the classroom.

Attendants and Aides

Other members of the support team within a school include attendants, who are available to help with children with total care needs such as feeding and toileting. Aides, on the other hand, generally assist in the academic program. Both attendants and aides receive their instructions from the classroom teacher who remains responsible for the programs and students in the class. The classroom teacher may also seek support from psychologists, speech pathologists, diagnosticians, specialists for children who are blind or deaf, and sometimes physiotherapists.

When problems arise, the classroom teacher can request that a problem-solving team be formed by the M&R staff. The team is a problem-solving unit made up of volunteer staff members (see Chapter 12). Frequently, the team includes the school guidance counsellor, district psychologists, a member of the administration, and, of course, the M&R staff.

The team approaches the problem using a prescribed plan, and offers a series of possible options for the classroom teacher. Follow-up sessions are arranged to provide the teacher with continued support if needed.

These resources help teachers do the best possible job. A close working relationship with people in these supportive roles ensures that the student with special needs will be assessed accurately and that feasible programs will be drawn up which are implemented properly. A close relationship also makes teachers feel that they are not alone; the value of that support is immeasurable.