



TABLE 4.1 Changing Perspectives of Professionals Toward Families With a Child With a Disability

Issue	Traditional Attitude	Contemporary Attitude
1. "Vision"	Parents' greatest need (to which professional counseling and advice is geared) is to accept the burden of raising their child and to become realistic about his or her limitations and the fact that disability necessarily results in second-class citizenship.	Families need to be encouraged to dream about what they want for themselves and their son or daughter with a disability, and they need assistance in making those dreams come true. These dreams and future plans should lead to expectations that all members of the family are entitled to full citizenship. Vision replaces despair.
2. Support and assistance	Parents' difficulties in coping with the child are largely psychological or psychiatric in nature, and the proper interventions are psychiatric or psychological counseling.	Families can benefit from one another. One benefit that almost all families need is the emotional resiliency and information that other families have acquired about life with disabilities.
3. Socialization	Mothers need respite to alleviate the stress and burden of caring for their child.	Families need the child with disabilities to have friends and integrated recreational opportunities in order to respond to the child's needs for socialization, affection, and identity.
4. Hope for the future	Mothers need clinical information about disability.	Families need information about and inspiration from people with a disability who are successfully integrated into community life.
5. Instructional emphasis	Mothers need training related to skill development and behavior management so they can be "follow-through" teachers for their child and implement home-based lesson plans.	Families need encouragement and ways to ensure that the child has a functional education taught in natural environments. This encouragement and help should assist families to enlist the support of the natural helpers in those environments (e.g., family, friends, store clerks, bus drivers, scout leaders).
6. Social support	Many families are financially unable to meet their child's needs and should seek out-of-home placement.	Many families need new policies to provide, for example, direct subsidies and new tax credits to help meet the financial demands associated with disability in the home and family setting.

SOURCE: Adapted from A. Gartner, D. Lipsky, and A. Turnbull, *Supporting Families With a Child With a Disability* (Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes, 1991), pp. 202–204.