

THE ROLE OF THE TEACHER

“I have come to understand the role of teachers as natural development specialists, trained, like parents, through a combination of didactic and experiential lessons who know...how to understand and work with children.

Just as teachers must work on a daily basis with the preventative and developmental aspects of the emotional state of...children...they are also faced with working with the results of emotional problems.... within this work they act as therapists.”

Regarding teachers of students identified as seriously emotionally disturbed:

“Finally, someone had taken those children with disturbances...I was elated,...but my elation turned to despair when I discovered that the teachers were told that they were teachers and not therapists, and that their role was education, not treatment. Again the therapeutic role played by teachers was negated and credit was certainly not given when it was due.”

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