Communicating with Your Child - More than words !

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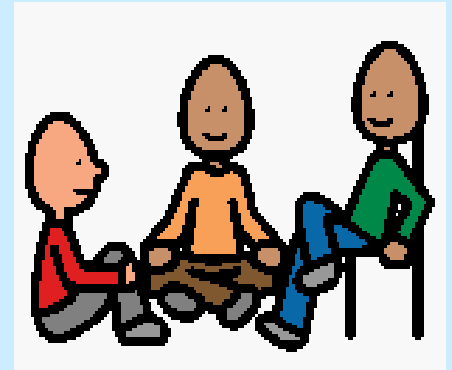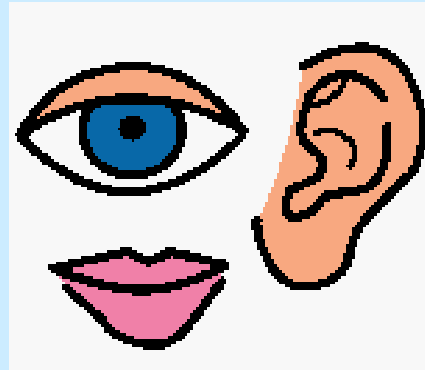
I hear and I forget.
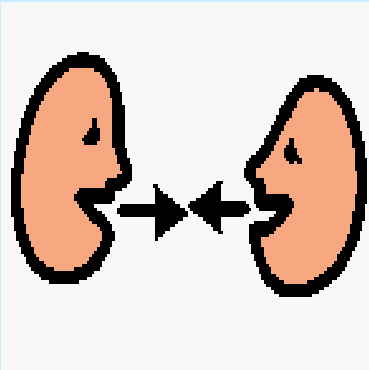# I see and I remember.
I do and I understand.

Chinese Proverb
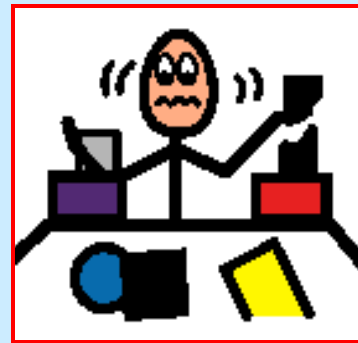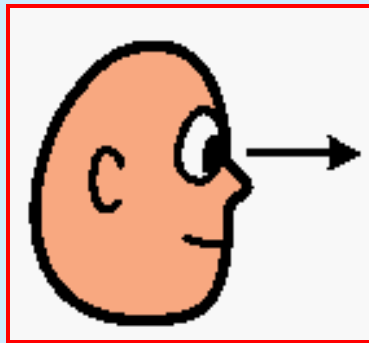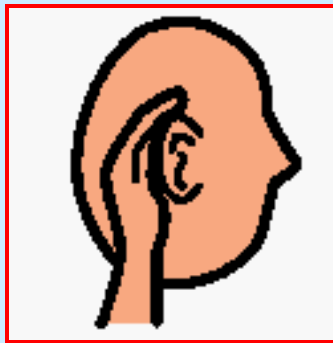
What is communication ?

More than just words *#@!?*!

It's the exchange of information, feelings, intentions and ideas.

Why is it so important ?

The ability to communicate is linked to a child's quality of life and the ability to function in society ...

Children with little or no language –

* may not know what's going on;

* many not know what is expected of them;

* are cut off from and can't socialise with other children;

* are more dependent on others.

Development of communication skills

* Coo, gurgle, cry or move their body;

* Look at objects, fuss, smile, reach for or push away objects & people;

* Laugh, make random sounds, look an adult in the eye or move the adult's hand to reach something;

* Use reguar sound patterns ('dada'), point, wave, kiss, hug or make choices;

* Mimic the sounds of objects ('moo'), use gesture (pat chair to say 'sit here') and objects, photos or concrete line drawings (line drawing of a cat);

* Use single spoken words, manual signs, abstract graphics (more PCS) or single printed words;

* Combine 2 or more spoken words, manual signs, graphics or written words.

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Kurrambee SSP

At Kurrambee we believe that communication is possible for all children, irrespective of their ability or disability

We believe that communication is vital to everyday living and plays a pivotal role across all aspects of student learning.

All students to have at least 1 IEP Goal that addresses Communication (English)

Our Challenge ...
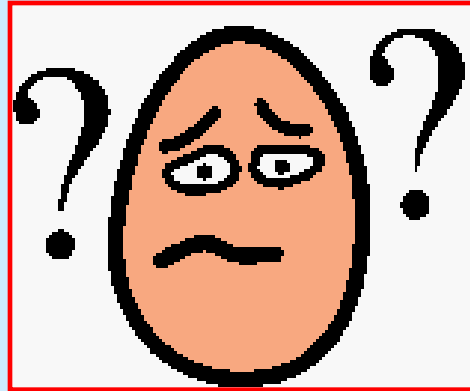
Communication is a complex process.

The most challenging and immediate task facing parents and others working with children without useful language is to establish a means of communication.

Do you have a calendar that you write things on to help you organise your life ?

Do you have a list of things to do on your desk or fridge ?

Do you make up a shopping list before you go shopping ?

Have you ever pointed to a picture in a catalogue of an item you would like, to show some one what you want ?

Have you ever read a sign to tell you want line to stand in or what door to exit from ?

Do you ever write notes to your family or co-workers to explain what you want them to do ?

Did you ever attach a note to your bathroom mirror or steering wheel to remind you to do something ?

To Do:

Have you ever read step-by-step instructions to assist you to assemble an item ?

"When I see it ... then I understand."

Visual Supports

Visual supports are those things we _see_ that enhance the communication process.

Body Language, objects and printed matter of any kind can become visual supports for communication – as long as the student can derive meaning from them.

Effective Visual Supports

* Easily recognised
* Easily understood
* Universally understood
* Non-Transient (always there)

Symbolic Representation

Objects

Object Symbols

Photographs

Drawings

Line Drawings

Whole written words - familiar words

Whole written words - unfamiliar words
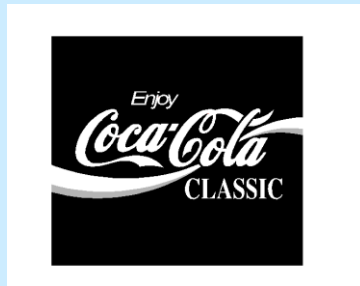
Coca-Cola Example

Object Symbol/Remnant
Label from coke bottle

Photographs
Photo of coke can

Drawings
Coloured Boardmaker

Line Drawings
B&W Boardmaker

Whole written words –
Familiar script

Whole written words –
Unfamiliar script

Coca - Cola

Tools To Give Information

Presenting information in a visual form –

* Helps establish and maintain attention
* Gives information that's easier for the student to understand
* Clarifies verbal information
* Provides a concrete way to teach concepts such as time, sequence, cause/effect
* Gives the structure to understand and accept change
* Supports transitions between activities or locations.

Daily Schedules

A schedule gives a student information such as:

* what's happenning today
* what is not happenning today
* what is the sequence of events
* what is changing that I normally expect
* when is it time to stop one activity and move on to another one

Chris's Schedule

Calendar Time	Toy Time	Books	Writing

Lunch	Sandpit	Art	Bus

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Mini-Schedules

<u>Unpack Bag</u>
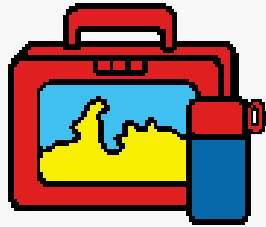
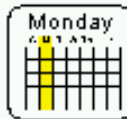|			
Lunchbox	Communication Book	HS Diary	Bag on Hook

Calendars

Calendars can be used by students with a wide range of abilities. A student does not need to be able to speak or read to use the calendar concept successfully. Knowing or reciting days of the week or moths of the year are not prerequisities and are actually unnecessary skils for meaningful calendar use.

Calendars

* Which days are school days
* Which days are not school days
* When regular activities occur (Barnardos)
* Appointments - doctor, haircut, etc
* Who will be at home after school
* Today's teacher (RFFT)
* Countdown to special activities (Party !)

November 2009

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
						grandma
gymnastics 2	3	swimming 4	5	6	Respite 7	8
doctor 9	10	swimming 11	12	birthday 13	party 14	grandma
gymnastics 16	17	swimming 18	19	20	Respite 21	22
23	24	swimming 25	haircut 26	27	28	grandma
30	31					

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Choice Boards and Menus

One of the most common and often the first form of visual communication a child will use.

* Teach acceptable requesting behaviour

* Broaden range of choices for kids

* Improve communication effectiveness

* Provide a way of saying something is not available

* Reduce protesting behaviour

Leisure Choices
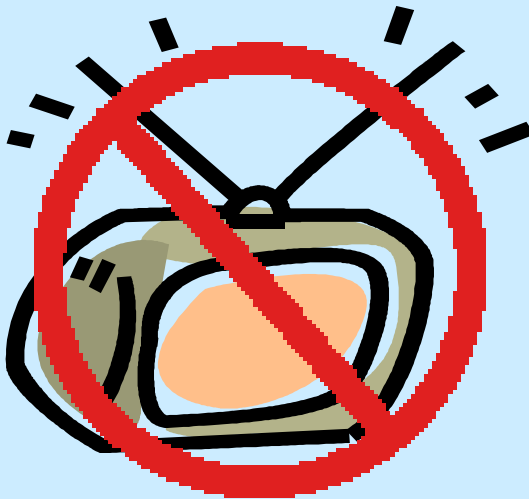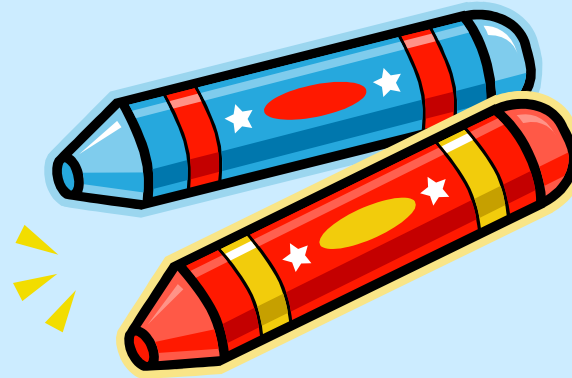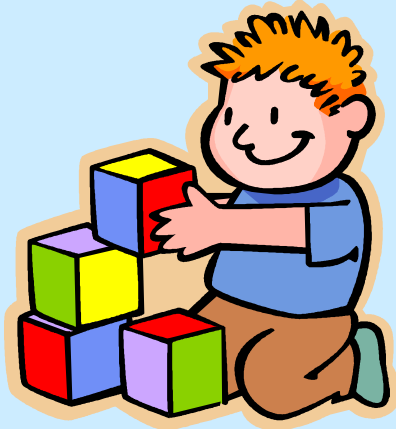
Communicating 'No'

* What is not a choice
* What is not acceptable behaviour
* What is not going to happen

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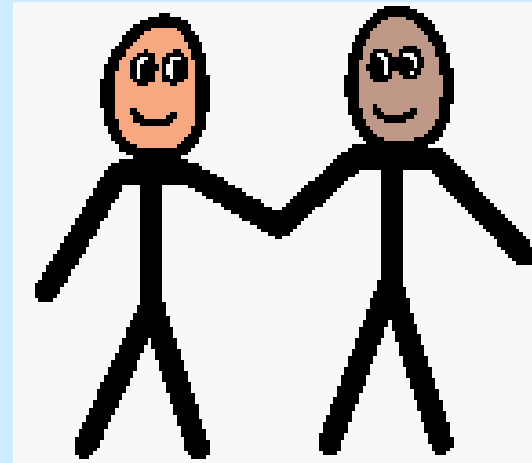
People Locators

* Who is here today
* Who is not here
* Where someone is
* Who is coming later
* When someone will come
* Who is supposed to come but will not
* Who is not supposed to come but will
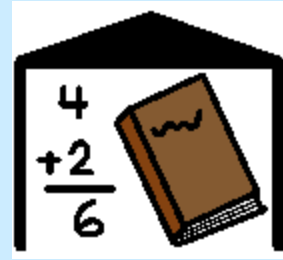
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Where is My Family ?

Dad	home
Mum	horse show
Chad	work
Ralph	home
Carrie	horse show

Transition & Travel Helpers

How can I help ?

1. Prepare students for transitions
2. Make transitions part of the routine
3. Give information and cues to prepare students for what is next
4. Let students know when they can return to the activity they don't want to leave.
5. If you are transitioning to a less prefferred activity, let the student know what will be happenning after this thing he doesn't like.

Where are we going ?

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Visual Strategies to Organise the Environment

Organising the environment with visual supports can:

* Create orderliness that leads to stability

* Lead to structure and predictability

* Help students function more independently

* Lead to being responsible for their own belongings

* Make it easier for everyone to find or remember what they need.

Labelling

* Label your child's belongings with their photo
* Label their personal spaces
* Label where things belong
* Label the environment (where appropriate)

Organising Life in General

- Signs
- Lists
- Charts
- Remembering & Giving Messages
- Memory Supports

Communication between Environments

Visual Bridges

Communication between home and school frequently becomes parents and teachers trying to write quick notes to each other.

What would happen if your child was responsible for this ?

Home-School Communication

1. Use symbols that are easily recognised by the student
2. Make sure everyone can understand it !
3. Make the student as much a part of the preparation as possible
4. Be flexible about when you include this activity in your day
5. Have some variety in your routines
6. Use this to teach expanded communication (initiating conversation & turn taking)
7. Be a multimedia experimenter !!!

Communication at Home

Visual tools are excellent resources for the home to:

* Give information

* Provide structure and organisation

* Manage behaviour

* Support communication and independence for greater family enjoyment

Creating Opportunties for Communication at Home

* Put a desired object up high - but still in sight (request)
* Put a funny hat on (comment)
* Hide favourite toys/activities (where ?)
* Give an empty cup to your child (request)
* Tighten the vegemite lid before making toast (help)
* Start to play with your child's favourite toy (my turn)
* Stop pushing the swing or turn the DVD off (more)

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Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS)

* Uses the physical exchange of items to teach the child to initiate communication

* The child first learns to request items that they really want

* The child is taught to hand an exchange card (what they want) to an adult who is holding the desired item

6 Phases of PECS

1. The Physical Exchange
2. Persistence and Distance
3. Discrimination Training
4. Sentence Structure
5. Responding to "What do you want ?"
6. Responsive and Spontaneous Commenting (I have …, I see …)

[YouTube](#)