

Part 5:

Augmentative and Alternative Communication for Autistic Individuals: Problem Solving

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AutismONTARIO

TRACIE LINDBLAD



Speech-Language Pathologist

Masters of Education (Curriculum)

Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA®)

Training, Certifications, Publications:

- Augmentative & Alternative Communication (AAC)
- Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS)
- Paediatric Feeding Disorders
- Interprofessional Education & Practice

Conflict of Interest

- Salaried employee of Autism Ontario
- Clinical Advisor for Linggo
- Advisory Committee - ASAT

Agenda

Problem Solving - Across Several Themes

- Support
 - Assessment
 - Training
- AAC systems
 - Types of EBP systems
 - Features to consider
- The Individual
 - Who benefits?
 - When do you introduce AAC and reasons why?

Agenda

Problem Solving - Across Several Themes

- Teaching Language
 - Bilingualism and AAC
 - Sequence of teaching
 - End goal of independence
- Behaviours
 - Not attending to specific features
 - Repetitive and/or interfering behaviours
- Other Questions
 - Advocacy
 - Adapting the environment (use & consistency)

Support for AAC Services



Support for AAC Services

- Where can I get an AAC assessment?
- Who is qualified to do this?
- Why are there pre-requisites for accessing an AAC assessment at a government clinic?
- Where can I learn more about AAC?
- Where can teachers/SLPs/other professionals access additional training in AAC?

AAC Systems



AAC Systems

- What is the current research for different types of AAC systems for autistics?
- Why is one type of system better than another?
- What are the important things to think about as the end goal?
- What about the different features of the SGD?
 - Picture types
 - Grid size
 - Position/motor planning
 - Predictive text
 - Navigation

The Individual



The Individual

- Who is AAC best suited for?
- Why do children with autism struggle to learn language and communication?
- Why do autistic adults have different opinions about AAC?
- When should you introduce AAC and why?

Teaching Language



Teaching Language

- Bilingualism and AAC
- Sequence of teaching – why do we teach in a specific order?
- Uses / functions of language
- What about grammar?
- What about other theories of language for autistics – Core Vocabulary vs Fringe, Gestalt Language Processors (GLP) vs a developmental approach?

Behaviours



Behaviours

- Assess behaviours
- Is the specific behaviour/skill needed?
- Is the skill or behaviour weak or absent?
- Is the behaviour (or feature) interfering with functional communication?
- Can you teach a response for increased independence or functional use?

Advocacy



Advocacy

- The original basis for a **human right to communicate** derives from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (United Nations, 1993), adopted in 1948.
- The centerpiece of the declaration with regard to communication is Article 19, which states:

"Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression:
this right includes freedom to hold opinions without
interference and to seek, receive and impart information and
ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers"

([United Nations, 1997](#))

Advocacy

- Why is evidence-based practice (EBP) - the process and the data important?
- What resources can help you advocate for your child?
- How can I adapt environments to help my child be successful?

Resources

- [AAC Clinics in Ontario](#)
 - adp@ontario.ca (email them to obtain a list from the Assistive Devices Program – ADP)
- AAC Training Resources
 - Vocabulary – [Requests before Naming & Specific Content Words before Core Vocabulary](#)
 - PECS – [AIM course](#), [AFIRM module](#)
 - AAC/SGDs – [AIM course](#), [AFIRM module](#)
- AAC Research
 - Research Depts. – [Penn State, AAC Program](#)
 - Researcher and Clinician – [Cindy Gevarter](#)



Feedback Survey

- Please answer each question in the survey
- The questions include items with:
 - A Likert scale (i.e., a 5-point scale with a range of responses)



- Selecting only one answer (single answer)
- Selecting all answers that might apply (multiple selections)
- Text boxes where you type your answer

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