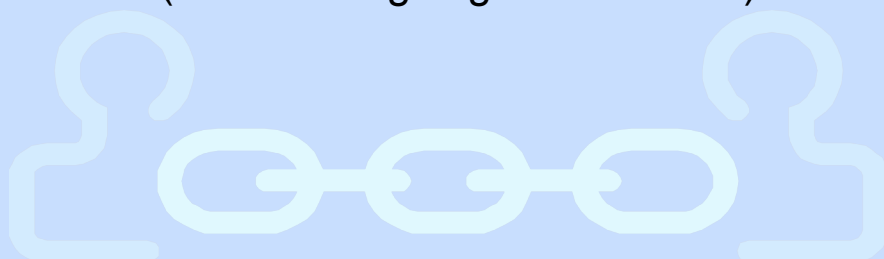# Intervention and Implementation
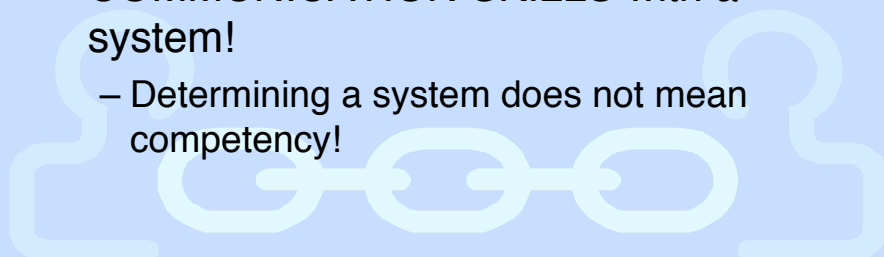
Growing Communication Skills in Students using AAC

(code for ongoing assessment!)

Integration with Assessment

- You may have determined the motor skills, vision skills, cognitive skills and language skills to match to a system, but you still need to consider COMMUNICATION SKILLS with a system!
  - Determining a system does not mean competency!

What is Communication?

Expressing needs and wants
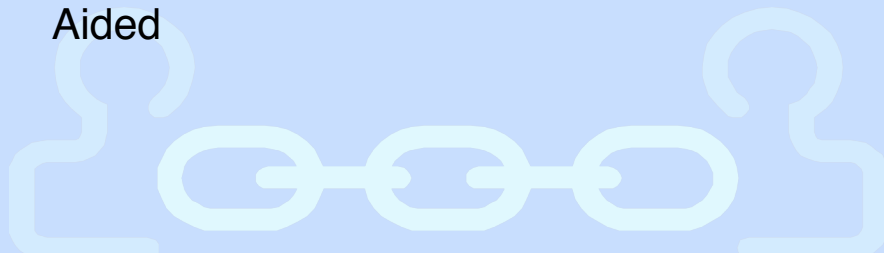Developing social closeness
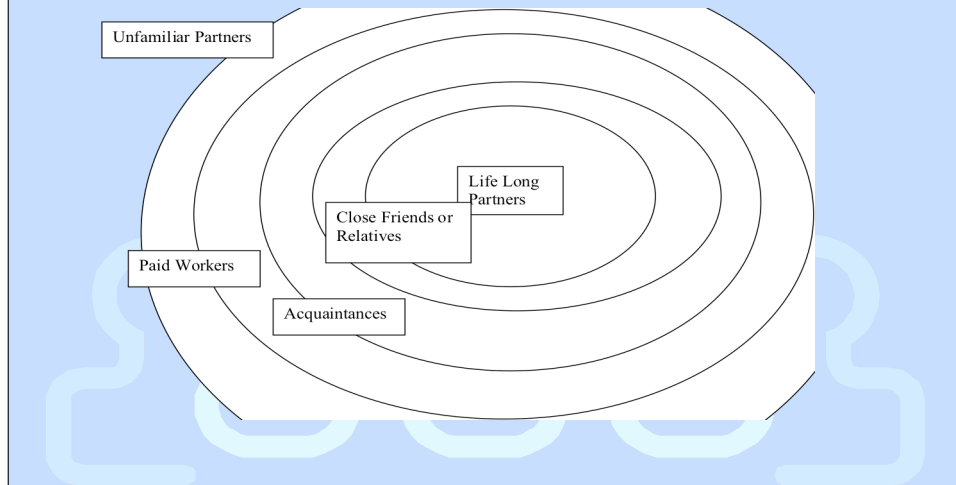Exchanging information
Fulfilling social etiquette routines

Multi Modal Communication

Unaided

Aided

Social Networks

Unfamiliar Partners

Paid Workers

Acquaintances

Close Friends or Relatives

Life Long Partners

Levels of Communication Skill

- Emerging Communicators
  - An individual who does **not** have a RELIABLE method of EXPRESSIVE communication through SYMBOLIC language.
- Context Dependent Communicators
  - An individual who **has** SYMBOLIC COMMUNICATION that is RELIABLE, but it is **limited** to particular CONTEXTS or PARTNERS.
- Independent Communicator
  - An individual who **has the ability** to communicate anything on any topic to anyone in any context.

http://depts.washington.edu/augcomm/03_cimodel/commind1_intro.htp

What is communicative competency in AAC?

- Four Areas:
  - Operational Competency
  - Linguistic Competency
  - Social Competency
  - Strategic Competency

Barriers to Communication Competency

- Systems not available
- Lack of training
- Don't need it attitude
- Won't use their own voice if they have other supports
- Limitations of vocabulary
- Access
- Fear of systems
- Dependency

How do we work past these?

- Choose opportunities to communicate
  - Why?
    - Targeting multiple types of communicators
    - Targeting use of multiple systems
    - Targeting differing communication functions
    - Targeting improvement in functional usage
    - Targeting training of staff support

What do I use to build Communication Competence?

- **Access to communication options**
  - Communication signal lists, Communication scrap books.
  - Picture/photo boards or eye gaze systems.
  - Voice output technology
    - Simple
    - Complex
- **Vocabulary**
- **Opportunity to practice and use the options in motivating tasks or environments**

Working it all into the day of a child!

- Observe the child throughout their day
- Where is the child? What does the child need to say, when?
- Work with others! School teams, family members, therapy staff, etc.
- Remember- Communication is a work in progress! Be flexible!

Develop a Plan

- Choose activities
  - that allow frequent opportunities for communication
  - With a variety of language functions
  - With a variety of partners (if possible)
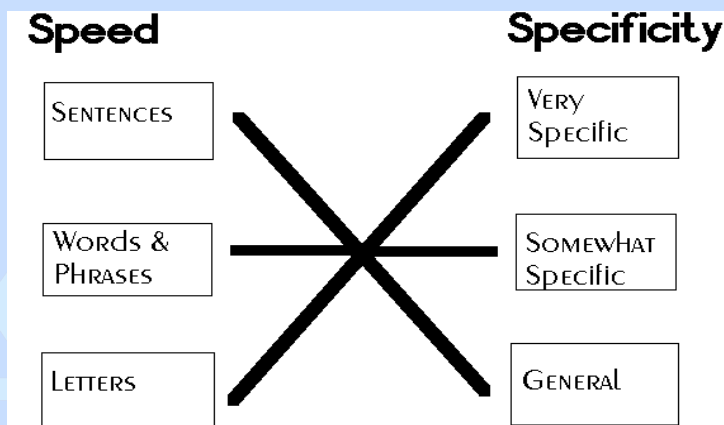
How do I do this?

complete an observation survey of a student or review schedule of their day/week, etc.

WATI or handout example or create your own!

Vocabulary

- Factors to consider in choosing vocabulary:
  - **age**
  - **peer group identification**
  - **cultural and family experiences**
  - **regular activities**
  - **special preferences**
  - **future linguistic development.**
  - **representation types**

What type of language to use?

| Speed	Specificity
Sentences	Very Specific
Words & Phrases	Somewhat Specific
Letters	General

Core Vocabulary

- General
- Needed in many contexts or environments
- Frequently used
- Made available for use, learned across contexts

Fringe or Supplemental Vocabulary

- Specific words
- Typically nouns related to activity
- Changeable
- Needed once in a while

Core versus Supplemental

- Core Vocabulary

  – Pool of messages that address 90% of the needs for any activity

- Fringe or Supplemental

  – Highly specific messages that are directly linked to the activity.
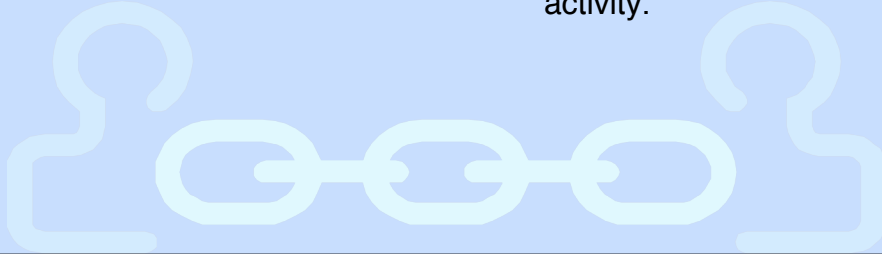
Activity Based Language Sets

- Vocabulary directed by the task.
- Arranged by the cognitive and language abilities and needs of the learner.
- Focus on repetition and learning of symbols and message function (areas of communication function).
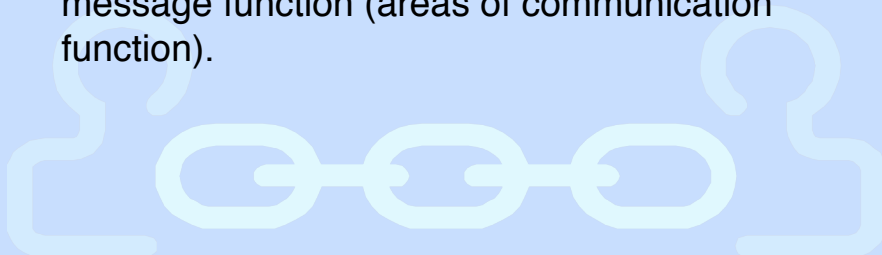
At School

- Think about communication--not just academic concepts!
- Work with your school team to integrate symbols, words, messages, systems into the environment!
- Different systems for different tasks!
    - Use 'Wearable' devices and keep the communication on the body if possible and tolerated!
        - Go Talk 5, iTouch with Proloquo2go, etc.
    - Make manual boards or books to take with!
        - Small pocket books, communication rings, boards for swimming, pillowcases for bedtime, communication bracelets, etc.

Schedules and Task Boards are <u>not</u> Communication Boards

- Create a template and use over and over.
- First/Then boards.
- Reminders about behavior.
- Steps to complete a task.

How would this look?

- Example: Music Time
  - Present the schedule of activities for the day-show that Music is next.
  - Present choices of songs according to the cognitive level of the child
  - Once the song was chosen, use a song board to mediate aided language stimulation while singing.
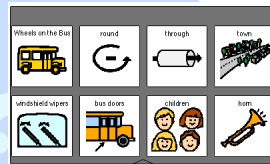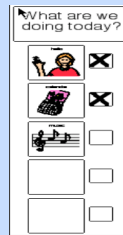
Strategies to Support Communication

- Aided Language Stimulation
- Sabotage
- Misinterpretation
- Environmental Communication Training (ECT)
- Prompting Hierarchies

Aided Language Stimulation

Aided language stimulation is when a verbal communication partner "highlights symbols on the user's communication display as he or she interacts and communicates verbally with the user."

(Goossens' et al., 1992)

http://www.dynavoxtech.com/training/toolkit/details.aspx?id=396

Sabotage

Create situations where the child will be forced to communicate.

For example, if you were playing with Playdough, you might put the unopened jar in front of the child creating a need for communication.

http://www.dynavoxtech.com/training/toolkit/favorites.aspx

Misinterpretation

Purposely misinterpret a message that has been communicated to create a situation where the child needs to use the communication system.

For example, the child may ask you for a puzzle. Although you know the request is for a puzzle, you respond by retrieving different toy. You have recognized the attempt to communicate but misinterpreted the message. This gives the child an opportunity to use the communication system to clarify the message.
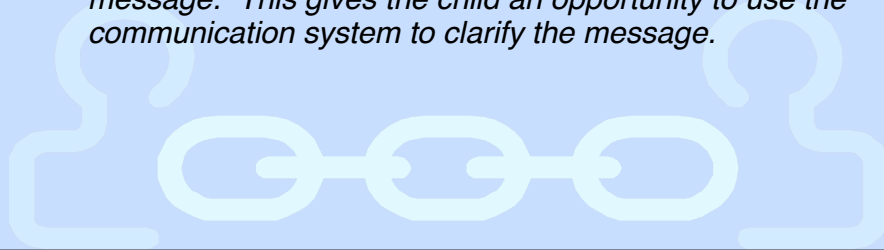
Environmental Communication Training

- Initiated by Dr. Karlan
- Specific Training Techniques
  - Activity Based Objectives
  - Environment Modifications
  - Partner Training
    - Prompting Hierarchy
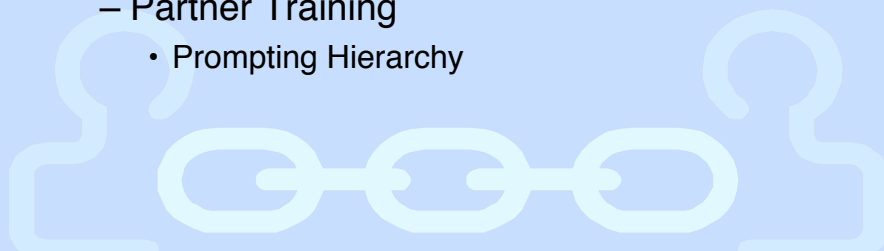
ECT Prompt Hierarchy

STEP 1:	STEP 2:	STEP 3a:	STEP 3b:	STEP 4:
Pause Focus your attention on the child Pause	Ask an open question Pause	Provide a partial prompt Pause	Request for verbaliza-tion Pause	Provide a full model Pause

**DON'T FORGET DESCRIPTIVE FEEDBACK**

Descriptive Feedback

Serves three functions:

- Immediately **acknowledges** that the listener "heard" the student or young child
- **Confirms** that the message sent by the student or young child is the one understood by the listener
- Can be used to **model an expansion** of the message expressed by the student or young child
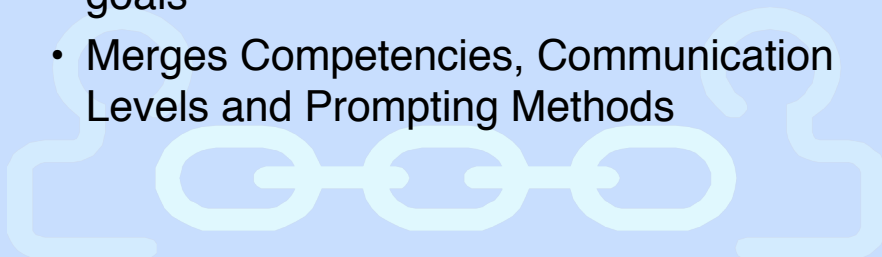
Keeping Track

- Dynamic AAC Goal Grid
- Augmentative & Alternative Communication Profile by Tracy Kovach
- Customized Data Sheets
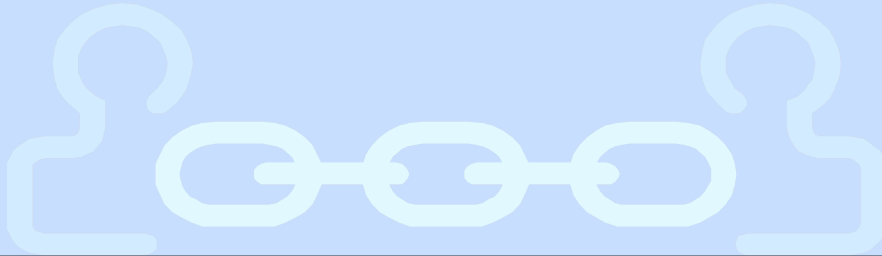
Dynamic AAC Goal Grid

- Download from http://www.dynavoxtech.com/training/toolkit/
- Means to assess and target specific goals
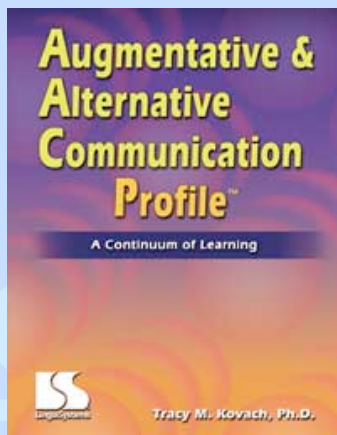- Merges Competencies, Communication Levels and Prompting Methods

Prompting Hierarchy

- Natural Cue
- Indirect Cue
  - Visual, gestural, verbal
- Direct Verbal Cue
- Direct Visual or Physical Cue
- Physical Assist

http://www.dynavoxtech.com/training/toolkit/favorites.aspx

Augmentative & Alternative Communication Profile

Augmentative & Alternative Communication Profile™
A Continuum of Learning

Tracy M. Kovach, Ph.D.

- Assesses performance in four competency areas over time
- Uses Emergent, Context Dependent and Independent definitions of users

Teaching Early Scanning Skills

- What is auditory/visual scanning?

  An INDIRECT method of looking and/or listening to CHOICES for communication

- Who is a candidate for this process?

  A child who cannot directly access items on a communication system because of motor or visual impairment

- How do you teach these skills?

  Introduce auditory and/or visual scanning through the use of PARTNER-ASSISTED SCANNING and electronic systems

Partner-Assisted Scanning

- Write down a list of choices on paper or a communication board.
- Preview symbols and auditory cues.
- Explain to the child how you would like him/her to respond.
- Present the choice one at a time with set time interval (e.g., 5 seconds)
- If no response, repeat choices with time interval.
- If still no response, provide verbal support to assist in choice-making process.
- Give verbal feedback describing the choice made.

Steps to Making it Work

- **Select the activity or subject- make it motivating!**
- **What do you want the student to do? (that's your objective)**
- **Decide who will do the following:**
  - **Gather vocabulary and make it available.**
  - **Arrange the environment.**
  - **Respond to the communication attempts and use appropriate prompting to make it move toward independence!**
- **Evaluate the activity or opportunity.**
- **Share the information!**
  - **(Use the handout examples to guide your processes, or use forms from WATI or other sources!)**

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Creating Communicating Classroom Opportunities Worksheet

Name: _____ Class/Subject Area: _____ Date: _____
Goal Area (circle): Linguistic Operational Social Strategic Activity: _____
Specific Goal or Targeted Behavior:
_____
_____

Objectives or Steps to the Activity	Vocabulary	Materials and Modifications	Who?	Facilitation/Prompting Techniques
	Core: Supplemental:			
	Core: Supplemental:			

Prompting: Natural Cue, Indirect Cue, Direct Verbal Cue, Direct Pointer/Light or Direct Visual/Gestural Cue, Physical Assistance/ Full Model.
Facilitation Techniques: Sabotage, Misinterpretation, Aided Language Stimulation, etc.

Begin with the end in mind.

-Stephen Covey
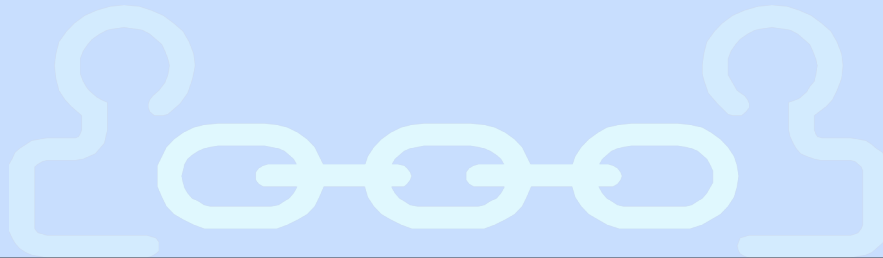
Activity

- Break into small groups
  - Discuss a current AAC user who may be having challenges in usage.
  - Brainstorm an activity
  - Suggest Vocabulary to be available/needed
  - Any environmental modifications?
  - Prompting or Facilitation Strategies?
  - How will and/or what kind of data will be kept?
- Be prepared to share key points with group.
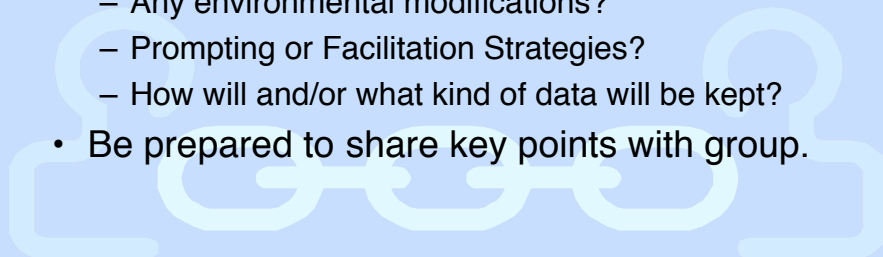
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    http://aacworkshop.pbworks.com/