USING A CLARIFICATION TOOL

Children's Treatment Network of Simcoe York
Augmentative Communication Consultation Services (ACCS)

STRATEGIES FOR COMMUNICATION PARTNERS

- Say that you don't understand. Don't pretend that you do.
- Repeat what you think you did understand.
- Encourage the individual to keep trying.
- Help them narrow down the topic, by using the categories in their tool (ie." Are you talking about something at home?" and point to the HOME category)
- Ask them to tell you using key words from their tool.
- Ask them to start spelling it or identify the first letter (using an alphabet page) - if they are able to do this.

SUPPORTING COMMUNICATION USING A CLARIFICATION TOOL

- Students must be taught how to use their tool; model using their tool wherever possible. When talking to the student, model what YOU are saying (e.g. "On the weekend I went to the movies with my brother" while pointing to the MOVIES and BROTHER pictures)
- Take time to explore the tool together. Talk about the categories and where vocabulary is found (e.g. "This is the ACTIVITIES picture. It is where you will find all the things you like to do.)
- When the verbal message is understood, show the student how to find key words in the message so they can clarify using their book if the message is not understood in the future. When repeating what you heard the individual say, rephrase it giving the context first, while pointing to the appropriate symbol. e.g., "Oh, at school today you played basketball", pointing to the SCHOOL and BASKETBALL pictures.
- Allow other students in the classroom to explore the communication tool. Provide them with instructions on how it is used.
- Do not use the tool for testing purposes. Phrases like "show me the dog" or "where is the apple" should never be used.
- Rehearse for meaningful communication exchanges:
  - "*let's ask _____ for more cookies, go see _____ and point to……*";
  - "*When we go to Grandma's, you can tell her about the fun trip you went on by pressing _____*".

SOME ADDITIONAL WAYS TO USE A CLARIFICATION TOOL

- Use as a picture dictionary to support literacy development through spelling.
- Use to generate ideas for writing or storytelling. For example, the students can use the people or animal category to choose characters for a story and the places category to choose a setting.
- Provide the tool to students as a support for journal writing. For example, it can often be difficult for a child to remember what they did at home over the weekend. Having a category page (e.g., 'places') available will give the children ideas of frequently visited places (e.g., dollar store, grocery store, park, beach, grandma's house) and aid in them remembering where they went/what they did.
- Can be used as a tool to teach categorization.
- Letter/alphabet page can be used to teach spelling or first letter cueing.

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