

USING A GO-TALK

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

WHAT IS A GO-TALK:

A Go-Talk is a Speech Generating Device (SGD). It turns pictures/symbols into spoken words. It holds 5 different "overlays" (sheets of paper with symbols printed on them). Each overlay can hold a different category of words. For example: Social messages, food, activities, places, etc. When a symbol is pressed, it speaks the corresponding message.

WHAT IS A GO-TALK USED FOR:

A Go-Talk gives individuals who have little or no speech a tool to express themselves. The device can be programmed with any words or phrases that individuals will need to use in their daily lives.

WHERE DO I START WITH THE GO-TALK:

Before children use the device independently, they require a learning period. During this time it is very important for everyone around them to model the device. Modeling means pointing to symbols on the device while speaking. Aim to find hundreds of opportunities to model the device every day. Here is an example of how you might model "more" multiple times in a short period of time while making a craft: "Put MORE on.", "You need MORE crayons.", "I have MORE glue." "Here is MORE paper." "Your friend is making MORE." "Let's build MORE." "I need MORE."

WHAT IS THE NEXT STEP:

Create opportunities for the child to communicate. For example, give them choices throughout the day and ensure the vocabulary to indicate their preference is programmed on the device. Some choices include: what to eat, which activity to complete first during a block when they have specific tasks to do, who to sit or play with, what to put on first when getting dressed, what to do during free play, where to go for a walk, etc.

Another opportunity is to hold back a preferred item or stop a preferred activity and have the child indicate they would like "more" or have them request the specific item.

It is important to model the expectation first, then give the child the opportunity to communicate.

For example:

- 1 – Start singing a favourite song (or doing a favourite activity) then stop partway through.
- 2 – Model "more" on the device, then immediately continue singing.
- 3 – Start singing. Stop partway through. Count to 10 in your head to give the child the opportunity to independently request "more".
- 4 - If they don't request "more" use a visual cue, by holding the device up to them or pointing towards the "more" symbol.
- 5 - If they still don't request more, model, "more" and continue singing.
- 6 – Repeat steps 3 - 5 each time.