

COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES

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Acknowledgement of Country

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First Nations people are advised that this workshop may contain images and voices of people who are no longer with us.

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Meet the Presenters

Michael Hardie
Queensland Team Leader
Positive Partnerships

Jennifer Winstone
Speech Therapist
Co-founder of
Communication Spectrum

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Session intentions

- supporting understanding and reducing language load
- practical strategies for receptive and expressive communication
- using visuals and AAC meaningfully
- creating more accessible interactions across everyday environments
- recognising communication support as a shared responsibility

Strategies should always be individualised and developed collaboratively alongside the young person and their support team.

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Communication support is collaborative

WHAT WE'LL COVER
Strategies we will explore

- Clearer language
- Processing time
- Visual supports
- AAC (Augmentative & Alternative Communication)
- Modelling
- Creating opportunities for engagement
- Supporting understanding
- Shared interests and connection
- Environmental adjustments

KEEP IN MIND
Important considerations

- There is no one-size-fits-all approach
- Communication changes across environments and situations
- Strategies should be individualised
- Communication support is a shared responsibility
- Collaboration across home, school and therapy matters



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Supporting receptive communication

- Understanding what is being said
- Understanding what is happening
- Understanding what is expected
- Reducing communication load
- Supporting participation



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Clear communication

- saying exactly what you mean
- reducing extra language
- giving one instruction at a time
- avoiding hidden meanings or vague language
- supporting speech with visuals or gestures




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Provide processing time



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Dylan




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Visual supports

- routines
- transitions
- understanding expectations
- making choices
- learning new tasks
- reducing uncertainty
- supporting interdependence



Turning on my Wii game

1. Place Wii near the TV
2. Plug in the Wii cord to the electrical socket
3. Plug in the sensor bar to the Wii controller
4. Connect the Wii to the TV using the HDMI cord
5. Turn on the TV
6. Select HDMI input
7. The Wii is now ready to play!



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Levels of iconicity

concrete

↑

↓

abstract

Real object		Some young people will need real objects to understand. This is the most easily understood visual support.
Part of a real object		In this example a part of an apple is representing an apple.
Miniature of real object		In this example a toy apple is representing an apple.
Photo of real object		Ensure the photo is as clear from distractions as possible. This will support the young person to focus on the relevant details.
Abstract picture/ concept		When selecting an abstract concept, consider which picture represents your activity, lesson or task. For example, when an apple is chosen for fruit break, the young person may believe that an apple is the only choice of fruit, or always has to be eaten at fruit break.
Line drawing		If using a line drawing which is hand drawn, consider how each person's drawing may differ. Drawings that are too and replaced by a drawing from a different person may cause confusion.
Printed or written word	apple	Consider the literal understanding of words and the level of comprehension.

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Supporting expressive communication


- Expressing thoughts and ideas
- Communicating wants and needs
- Sharing information and experiences
- Supporting connection and interaction
- Reducing communication pressure

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Modelling communication

- commenting instead of questioning
- modelling language during shared activities
- reducing pressure to respond
- expanding communication naturally
- following the young person's interests



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Creating opportunities for communication



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Communication opportunities

- shared activities
- following interests
- pausing and waiting
- commenting and responding
- offering choices
- creating predictable opportunities for interaction

Meaningful communication is more likely when interactions feel motivating and supportive.



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Shared interests

Shared interests can help support:

- Engagement
- Interaction
- social connection
- opportunities for communication across everyday environments.



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Echolalia

FUNCTIONS



Echolalia may help with

- Processing language and information
- Participation in conversations and routines
- Regulation of emotions and arousal
- Interaction with others
- Expression of thoughts, needs and feelings

STRATEGIES

Ways we can support communication

- Respond to the communication attempt
- Consider the context and possible meaning
- Reduce pressure to respond differently
- Model flexible language naturally
- Use visuals or AAC alongside speech
- Build communication through shared interests

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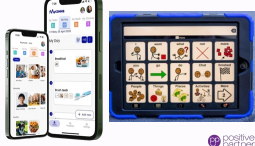

AAC

Low tech AAC

- visuals
- written supports
- communication boards
- schedules

High tech AAC

- speech generating devices
- tablets
- text-to-speech systems

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Ways to support AAC users

- Model AAC during everyday interactions
- Keep AAC available across environments
- Respond to all communication attempts
- Allow time for message creation
- Reduce pressure to communicate quickly
- Use motivating and meaningful interactions
- Acknowledge all forms of communication
- Create opportunities for participation throughout the day




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Attention and engagement




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Sam




I think one really big thing that other people kind of expect is they expect that




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When communication breaks down


pause and reduce language




Check understanding




Regulate first - communicate second




avoid repeating multiple times




Support with visuals or gesture

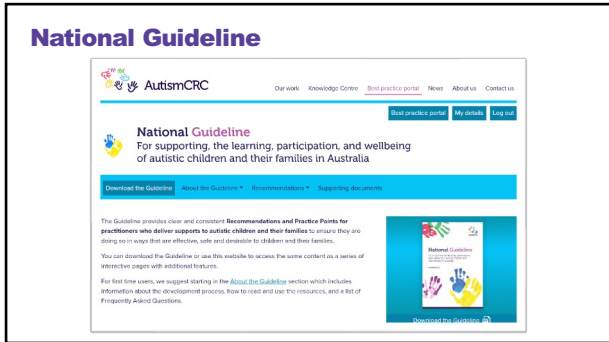


Repair together

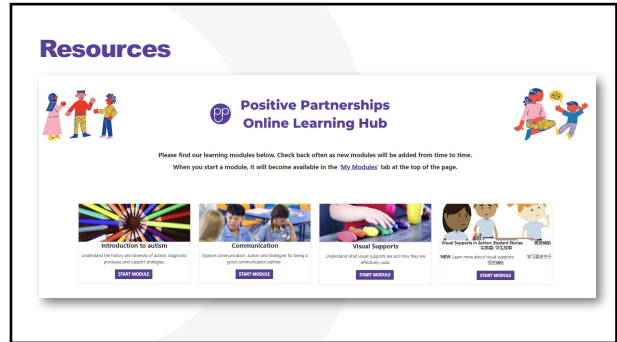




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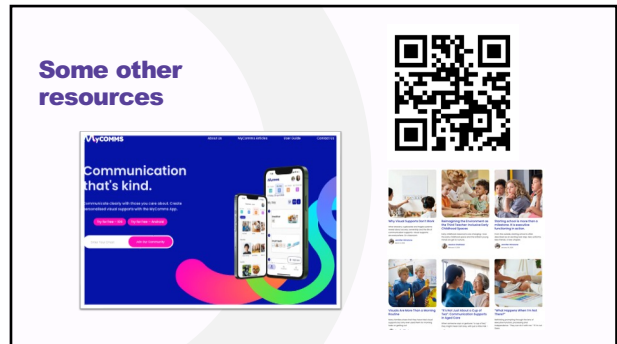
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