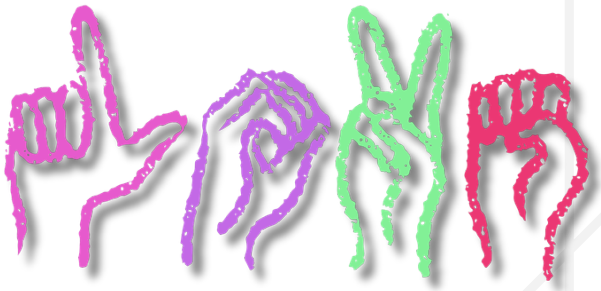
ADHD SLT

Neurodivergent-Affirming Speech Therapist and Well-Being Support

TOTAL COMMUNICATION APPROACH

A GUIDE TO SUPPORT THOSE WITH COMMUNICATION NEEDS







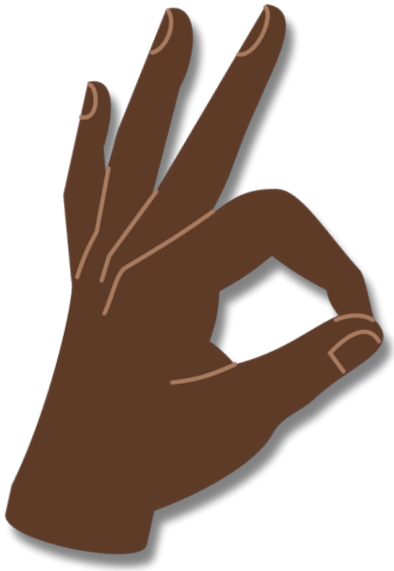
CONTACT ME:

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WHAT IS A TOTAL COMMUNICATION APPROACH?

A total communication approach integrates various strategies to support effective communication for individuals with diverse needs, encompassing both verbal and non-verbal methods. The first step to utilising this approach for a person with language and communication needs is having an up to date profile of their needs, This should be done by a qualified Speech and Language Therapist.







USE OF VERBAL AND NON VERBAL COMMUNICATION

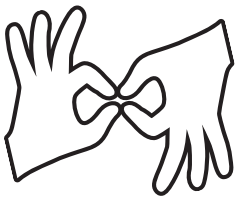
Utilize both verbal and non-verbal communication methods based on the individual's preferences and abilities. Some examples below:



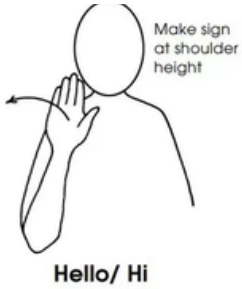
Spoken Language

Alternative Augmentative Communication (AAC)

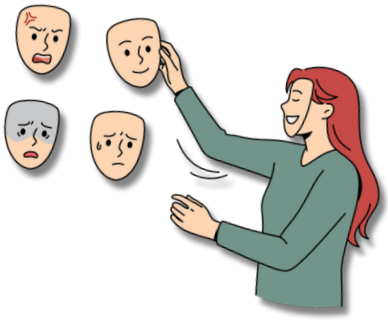




Sign language



Makaton



Facial expressions

VISUAL SUPPORTS

Implement visual supports to enhance understanding and communication clarity. Use visual schedules, visual cues, and visual aids such as pictures, symbols, and written words to reinforce verbal messages and promote comprehension.



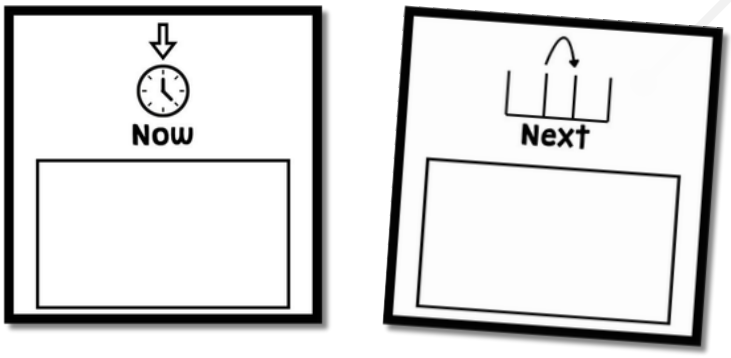
Visual timetables



Picture/Word Cards



Visual cues



Now and Next Boards

SENSORY CONSIDERATIONS

Take into account sensory sensitivities that may affect communication. Create a communication environment that minimizes distractions, respects sensory preferences (e.g., lighting, noise levels), and supports sensory regulation to optimize communication effectiveness.



Smells



Lighting



Touch, e.g fabrics.



Comfort



Overwhelm i.e too many people



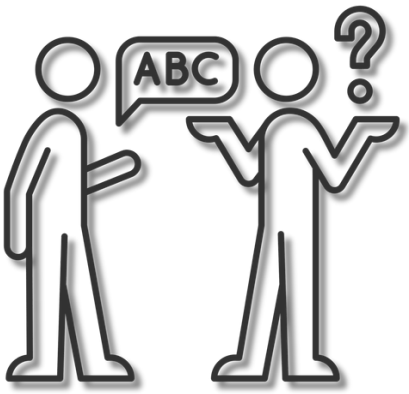
Noise

CLEAR AND SIMPLE LANGUAGE

Use clear, simple language when communicating, avoiding jargon, abstract concepts, or ambiguous statements. Break down complex information into manageable parts and provide concrete examples to facilitate understanding.



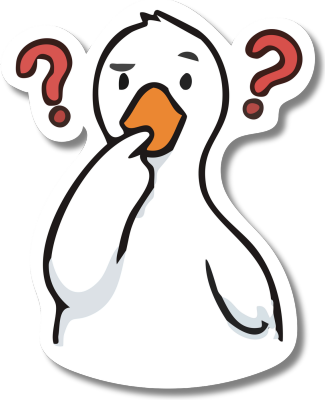
“Chunk” instructions into smaller parts



Avoid jargon and abbreviations



Be mindful of figurative language such as idioms



Say what you mean.

BE A RESPONSIVE COMMUNICATION PARTNER

Promote good communication by being a responsive and supportive communication partner. Encourage communication attempts, be aware of differing communication styles validate feelings and thoughts, and provide opportunities for the individual to express themselves comfortably and confidently.







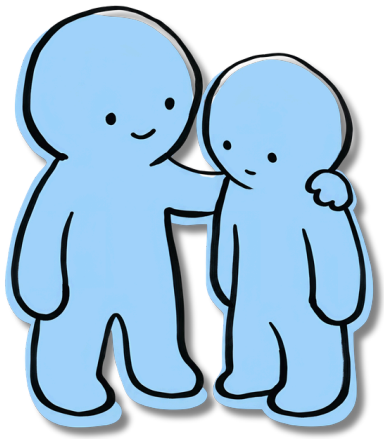


TRAINING AND SUPPORT

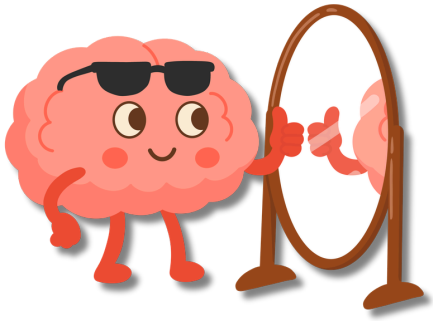
Provide training and support for communication partners, caregivers, educators and professionals involved in the person's life. Offer guidance on implementing effective communication strategies, understanding communication preferences and using AAC devices or supports.



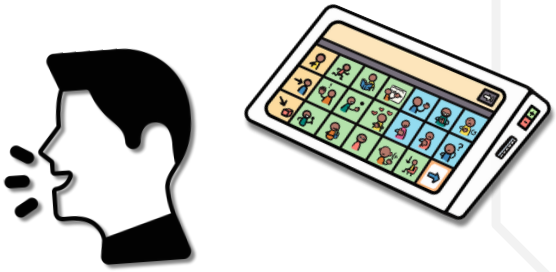
Engage in regular Continuing Professional Development (CPD).



Offer support.



Reflect on communicative breakdowns.



Respect ALL communication preferences.

BE CONSISTENT

Maintain consistency in communication approach and strategies across different settings and interactions. Reinforce learning and practice through repetition, positive reinforcement and knowing when to adjust when needed and when to contact an SLT if you are feeling lost.



Carry your knowledge over to all settings.



Be consistent.



It's okay to feel lost sometimes - reach out to an SLT.



Share your knowledge with colleagues.

ADVOCACY AND EMPOWERMENT

Advocate for the person's communication rights and empower them to advocate for themselves. Promote self-determination in communication choices, respect their preferences and ensure access to inclusive communication environments and opportunities.



Take a strengths based approach.

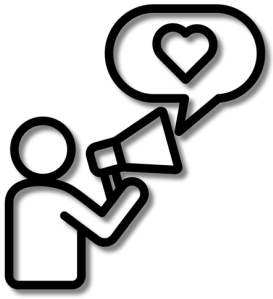


Use your voice to promote the person's right to self determination.





Use language that is positive and affirming.



Promote advocacy.

SUMMARY

In summary, a total communication approach combines various verbal and non verbal methods tailored to the person's individual needs. By incorporating ALL methods of communication available to the person we foster inclusive environments and promote meaningful interactions.

FURTHER RESOURCES AND READING:

Free training about inclusive communication - this is accredited and provides a certificate upon completion.

www.communication-access.co.uk

Sense Charity who offer support to disabled people have this total communication approach guide -

https://www.sense.org.uk/information-and-advice/ways-of-communicating/total-communication/

Communication Matters - provider that aims to increase communication accessibility in the UK.

www.communicationmatters.org.uk

LIKE THIS RESOURCE?

Thank you for exploring this ADHD SLT resource! 🌈
Created by a qualified Speech and Language Therapist with a neurodiversity-affirming approach.
Enjoyed this resource? Discover more printable activities, interactive games and communication resources at:
www.adhdslt.co.uk
Supporting communication, autonomy and well-being through creative, flexible activities. Scan the QR Code to explore!

ADHD SLT

Neurodivergent-Affirming
Speech and Language Therapist
and Well-Being Support