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SPEECH AND LANGUAGE THERAPY PARENT HANDOUT

How to Model Communication Boards

What is a Communication Board?

A communication board is a sheet of symbols, pictures or photos that a child will learn to point to, to communicate with those around them.

Why are Communication Boards important for my child?

Children who have language delays benefit from having multiple forms of communication presented to them at all times. Communication is a broad term to describe all the different ways we communicate with each other.

- Spoken language
- Signing
- Gesture
- Body language
- Facial expressions
- Visuals
- Vocalisations

Please see our AAC handout for further information about other types.

Communication boards are a type of Visual that supports the development of language. By providing language using spoken language, visual symbols, pointing to the symbols (gesture), and written word input, it helps the child to learn vocabulary faster.



When can Communication boards be used?

Communication boards can and should be used **everywhere!**



Park/playground:

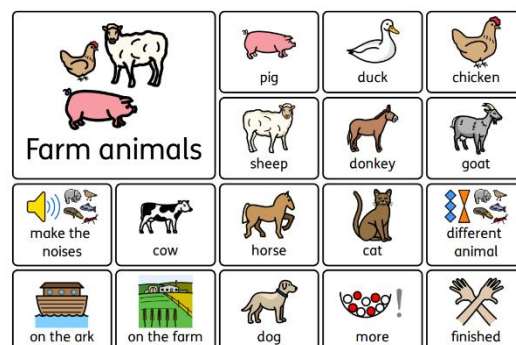


Play-based activities:

e.g. playdough

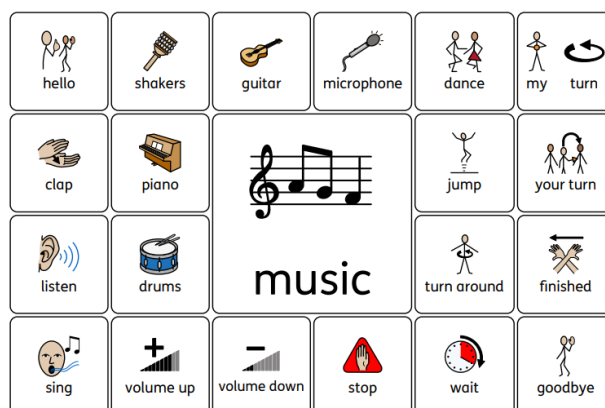


e.g. farm animals



Learning:

e.g. Music lessons



e.g. Story-time The Gruffalo





How to use a communication board

It is important to remember that this is a new way for your child to communicate, therefore they will need lots of time and support to learn how to use it effectively.

Children usually learn language by having adults and those around them, use the language themselves, which the child then learns to copy. It is the same principle with using a communication board. The adult will need to use the board often to give the child the opportunity to copy this.

What type of communication board would suit my child?

It depends on the child's overall attention, understanding, motivation, and exposure to communication boards. A qualified Speech and Language therapist can advise on the type of communication board and the level of simplicity/complexity.

At school, the Speech and Language therapy team have a wide variety of communication boards with varying levels of difficulty.

You can complete a request for communication boards to be sent home by completing a Home AAC Form and the Speech Therapy will send you digital copies of communication boards. On the Form, there is an opportunity to select specific activities that your child may be playing with such as: bubbles; playdough; water-play; nursery rhymes; balloons; foam etc.

*(Email the office at: office@lindonbennett.hounslow.sch.uk to request an **AAC home request questionnaire** and the Speech Therapy Team will email you digital resources to print and use at home)*



How to model the communication board for your child:

Step 1: Choose an activity your child is interested in, for this example we will use bubbles.

Step 2: Place the board so both you and the child can see and reach it. As you start to play, comment on what you and your child are doing, as you do this, point to the key words that you are saying, on the board.

Example: Say: “more bubbles” “pop”. Point to: “more” & “pop” on the board.

Pause each time you model a word or phrase, allowing your child time to copy by also pointing, if they feel ready to.

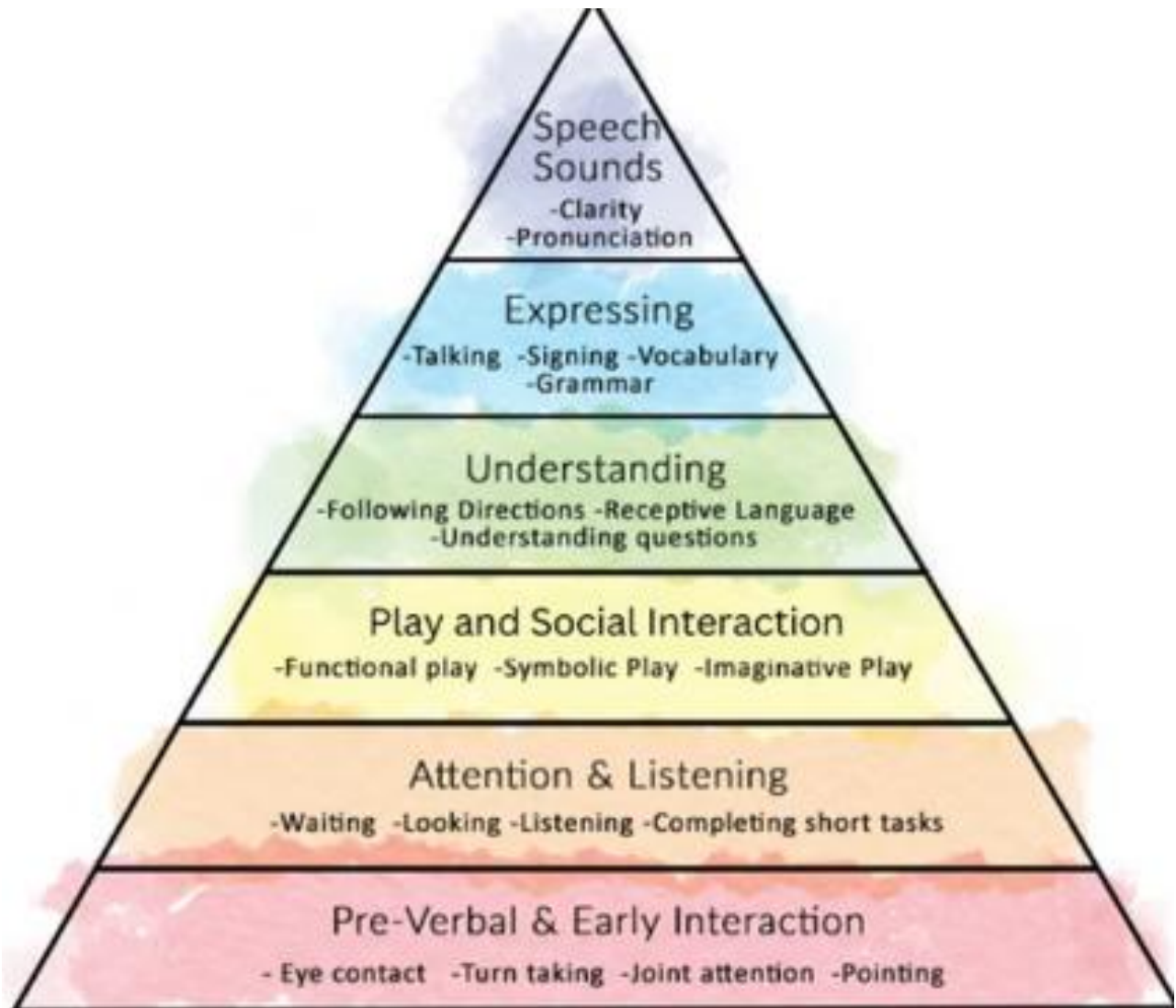
Step 3: If your child points to any of the pictures, it is important to name the picture they pointed to and then respond appropriately.

For example, if your child points to “pop” you would say “pop” and then blow a bubble and model popping it.





Communication Pyramid:



Modelling language consistently targets:

- Understanding
- Expressing