

SUPPORTING STUDENTS WITH COMMUNICATION DISORDERS

By Morganne Connick

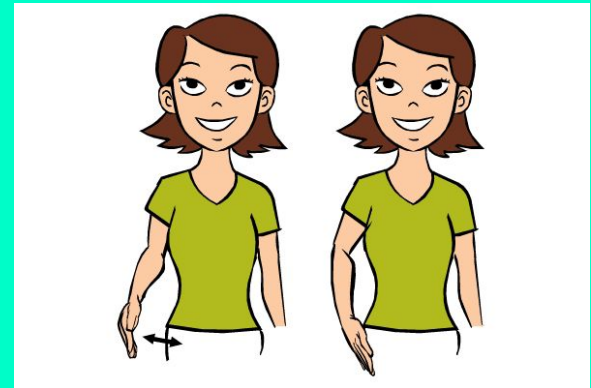
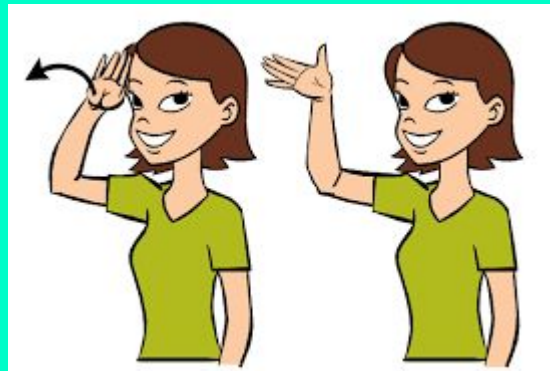
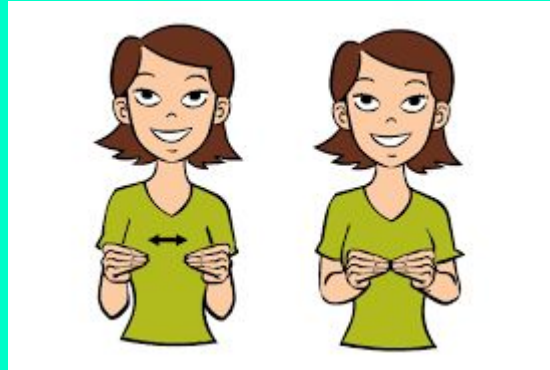
INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES

- The American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD) defines an intellectual disability as “ A disability characterized by significant limitations both in intellectual functioning and an in adaptive behavior, which covers many everyday social and practical skills. The disability originates before the age of 18” (AAIDD, 2010 as cited in Kuber,2018).

BENJAMIN AGE 5 (MADE UP SCENARIO)

- Benjamin is a five year old with a diagnosis of Trisomy 21 Down Syndrome and Apraxia.
- He is in grade one and will be turning six in November.
- He is nonverbal using gestures to communicate with his peers,
- Benjamin knows a few signs such as 'thank you', 'please', 'more', 'hello', 'goodbye' 'dog' and 'grandma'.
- The words he uses are 'mum', 'no' and 'Bud',
- He lives with his mother and has an older brother who he refers to as Bud.

BENJAMIN'S SIGNS



BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- Benjamin attends speech therapy once a week and works with an OT every two weeks,
- He is mobile without the use of walking devices,
- Benjamin spends the morning in the FIAP classroom and joins his classmates for art and music,
- He is easy going and enjoys playing with his peers, however, he becomes extremely frustrated when he cannot get his point across,
- He either throws objects or refuses to speak,
- These actions have lead to troubles in the classroom.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION CONTINUED












- Benjamin's mum was late to initiate speech with him,
- He did not start speech therapy until he was shy of three,
- Benjamin has been prone to ear infections which could be affecting his hearing.

BENJAMIN'S STRENGTHS

- Despite Benjamin's lack of speech he is extremely observant and catches onto tasks in the classroom every quickly,
- When given shapes and colours, Benjamin can match the objects to the assigned colour,
- He is eager to learn and catches on quickly to most tasks related to academia.

WE SPEAK PODD

A spiral-bound notebook with a grid of 12 cards and a sidebar of navigation cards. The cards are arranged as follows:

beautiful 	lucky 	fantastic 	trying 	go back to page 4a 
pretty 	right 	excellent! 	special 	oops 
handsome 	exciting 	cute 	go to list 	go to categories 7 

At the bottom of the notebook, there is a row of colored tabs with the following text: Question 8a, people 9a, actions 10a, like 4b 4c, wrong 5a, body 6a, categories 7a.

BENJAMIN'S SHORT TERM COMMUNICATION GOAL

- Benjamin's current short term communication goal is to use his PODD booklet to initiate a short conversation with one of his teachers outside the FIAP classroom by December,
- His speech path is confident that Benjamin will be able to communicate verbally even though he is progressing slowly. Down Syndrome is such a diverse disorder that children reach different milestones at different times.
- As Benjamin's journey with PODD continues there will be additional words and phrases added,
- The EA's will need to continue to be trained using PODD as Benjamin

<p>The Student</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Age 5,• Down Syndrome, Apraxia <p>Non-verbal however he uses a few audible words.</p>
<p>The Environment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• FIAP classroom with ten students most of which have Mild Intellectual Disabilities or ASD.
<p>The Task(s)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Using his PODD booklet, he will request assistance from another teacher in either his art class or music class.
<p>The Tool(s)</p>	<p><i>We Speak PODD</i> booklet, using images and limited text he is familiar with.</p>

SETT FRAMEWORK

Area(s) in which functional capabilities are currently of concern (Enter only one on each line. Use additional sheet for more areas of concern.)	Consider functioning in all customary environments.			
	Identify specific tasks in this area that are difficult or impossible at this time at expected level of independence.	A) Describe the special strategies, accommodations, and tools that are currently being used to lower barriers to the task.	B) Are there continuing barriers encountered when the student attempts this task? If so, describe.	C) Describe new or additional assistive technology to be tried to address continuing barriers, or indicate a need for further investigation.

SUMMARY OF THE CONSIDERATION of possible need for assistive technology services. If the team has determined that a need exists, describe what will be provided (more specific assessment of need for assistive technology; existing tools, adaptation or modification of existing tools; additional tools; technical assistance on device operation or use, training of student, staff, or family, etc.).

Decision	Summary of Consideration		
	Needs are currently being met without assistive technology. It is anticipated that current goals can be worked toward without assistive technology devices or services. AT is not necessary at this time.		
	It is anticipated that adequate progress cannot be made without the support of assistive technology. Assistive technology devices /services are required by this student and will be used for designated tasks in customary environments. (Specify nature and duration in the plan)		
	Further investigation / assessment is necessary to determine if or what assistive technology devices and services may be required. (Specify nature and timeline of investigation in the plan)		
List AT devices and services to be provided. Include those currently used successfully, and those to be tried or added.	Responsible Parties	Initiation	Duration
Trials with a variety			

TEAM MEMBERS TO HELP BENJAMIN REACH THIS GOAL

- Benjamin's speech pathologist at the school who will be helping to personalize the booklet and provide training the family,
- Benjamin's mum will be actively urging Benjamin to practice using PODD,
- Benjamin's teacher in the FIAP classroom who will be working with the SLP, Benjamin, Benjamin's mum, his EA and the art/music teacher,
- Benjamin's EA will help him work towards his goal of initiating conversation with his art teacher,
- Benjamin's art teacher has volunteered to be the teacher who Benjamin initiates a conversation with.

TRANSITION TO THE NEXT CLASS

- Benjamin will most likely come across a number of EA's in his time at school,
- The EA's who will be interacting with Benjamin will need appropriate training to help Benjamin with his *We speak PODD*,
- There will be a transition form and close communication with his SLP,
- There will continue to be contact with Benjamin's mum to track progress.

RESOURCES FOR EDUCATORS

Down Syndrome Association of West Michigan. (n.d). *Supporting Students with Down Syndrome in the Classroom*. <https://dsawm.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/2014-Educator-Manual.pdf>

Down's Syndrome Association. (n.d). *For New parents: Education Support Packs*. <https://www.downs-syndrome.org.uk/for-new-parents/education/education-support-packs/>

Notvita tech. (n.d). *PODD Communication Book*. <https://www.novita.org.au/equipment/podd-communication-books/>

RESOURCES CONTINUED

Canadian Down Syndrome Society. (2016, October 19) *Down Syndrome resources for teachers and schools.*

<https://cdss.ca/resources/>

Down Syndrome Education. (n.d). *Resources.*

https://www.down-syndrome.org/en-us/?_ga=2.120636488.1367986982.1554087345-1206830979.1554087345

Graham, H. (2018, February 26). *Down with Jax: adoption, Down Syndrome, 2 moms, and our random life adventures.*

<https://downwithjax.com/>