TAALC

NEWSLETTER

In This Issue

- Non Authentic Communication

- Peer Supports

TAALC Staff

Dr. Jacqui Kearns, Ed.D

Dr. Jane Kleinert, PHD CCC-SLP

Dr. Judith Page, PHD CCC-SLP

Ms. Lou Ann Land, M.S.Ed

Contact Us

taalc@uky.edu

Communication Deadly Sins

There are many classroom practices that hinder the development of effective communication. We like to think of them as "deadly communication sins". We've all committed these sins at one time or another in the course of our practice. Each month we will highlight a 'deadly sin' related to communication and describe how to implement a positive communication practice in place of the deadly sin.

This month's deadly sin is

Non-Authentic Communication

We've all seen them: the student will name 10 objects; ask for a drink 4/5 times; hit the switch to say….. These are examples of requesting a specific response, not communication. They really have no communicative purpose except to comply with a task request.

Authentic communicative activities on the other had have the following features:

1) Allow the student to say what **THEY** want to say – flexible.
2) Express real ideas through multiple modalities – facial expressions, gestures, vocalizations, devices.
3) Is non-obligatory – meaning that the student **chooses** to take a turn, comment, ask a question or request (Burkhart & Porter, 2010).

Use the following strategies:
- Model ideas about what to say; Comment - "What a beautiful day"
- Manipulate opportunities to communicate; " Oops, your forgot me"
- Use natural feedback based on the communication – "yes, student's name, it is a pretty day." I like it when the sun shines – wait for a form of acknowledgement from the student.

Remember, Communication is hard work – we have to make it worth the effort.

Intervention Helps!

we can help

Need help with an individual student's communication or want to start a district team?

Apply for Tier 2 or 3 Technical Assistance & Coaching

Contact: Jacqui Kearns for an application packet

Jacqueline.kearns@uky.edu

Peer Support for Communication

To earn ASHA CEUs you must:
- Pre-register for the course through your LIC
- Bring your ASHA number the day of the course
- Complete ASHA CEU form the day of the course
- Be present for the entire course. No partial credit will be provided

Peer partners are essential to authentic communication – not only do we need something to say, but we need someone to say it to. If we observe students without disabilities, we find that the vast majority of their communications are with their peers - their friends and classmates, however, Erik Carter of Vanderbilt University and his colleagues have found that when students with complex communication needs use their communication systems, it is usually to communicate with the adults in their environment, and not with their peers. This means as we design communication systems for students with complex communication needs, we must design those systems with the idea that our students' primary communication partners should be their peers and, therefore, must include things that kids want to talk with each other about!

It also means that we teach peers how to communicate with students with complex communication needs. One way that TAALC is doing this is by collaborating with the KY Peer Support Network Project at HDI. The Peer Support Network Project is funded by the Commonwealth Council on Developmental Disabilities to work with schools throughout Kentucky in implementing peer supports and peer networks. Peer *supports* occur as students support each other (targeted typical peers and a peer with a significant disability) to participate, engage and learn in all aspects of the general education class. Peer *networks* are designed to create opportunities for students to develop friendships. Students (3-6 students without disabilities and one student with a significant disability) meet weekly, under the guidance of an adult facilitator, and actively plan opportunities to connect outside of regular classes and school times, and throughout the week.

Both peer supports and peer networks require that peers understand how the focus student communicates. One strategy emphasized by TAALC and implemented by peers is aided language modeling. Peer supports and peer networks then provide the context for students to practice their communication and social skills together, in ways that are both authentic and highly motivating. And perhaps most importantly, students experience the value of friendships through those acts of communication.

Winter Webinars – Adobe Connect

Peer Supports for Communication– January 13
http://whoozin.com/HPF-PTN-7PUP

Core Vocabulary – February 17
http://whoozin.com/YWF-XA4-C4U3

Using Visual Scene Displays for AAC – March 16
http://whoozin.com/QFN-APY-RU3G

To Sign up, click on *View Event Web Page & RSVP* under each topic.