Team approach to successful AAC implementation - Therapist and parent perspective

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Laura Greene

AGOSCI Conference 2017

Introducing the Greene family

Sophie Greene

My name is Sophie.
I am 8 years old.

I love messy play -
kinetic sand, playdough.
I like to play games and
be active.

Sophie Greene

Angelman Syndrome. Non verbal. Receptive language excellent. Vocalisations: mama, papa, dada, yaya, p, b, t

Key word sign: approx 30 signs. Speech device: Nova chat 8

Theo Greene

My name is Theo.
I am 5 years old.

I like dogs, TV, music, marble run and playing outside.

Theo Greene

Angelman Syndrome. Non verbal. Receptive language excellent. Vocalisations: mama, papa.

Key word sign: approx 10 signs. Speech device: Liberator Rugged 7.

Typical therapy sessions

- Fortnightly therapy

- Initial goals set. Reviewed on 6 monthly basis

- Touch base before each session - core word focus?

- Bring motivating activities based on chosen core word

- Home environment

- Use own toys to model language

Typical therapy sessions

- Both modelling words

- Two people to fully engage child in activity whilst modelling core word

- Short attention span – importance of timely modelling

- Follow child's lead to find what is motivating for them

Core word activities

- Core word books in conjunction with low tech visual supports

Following interests

- Sophie – physical actions eg go, stop, jump. Games –same, different

- Theo – cars, marble run

Following up our goals

- Carrying talker -physiotherapist assessed impact on mobility
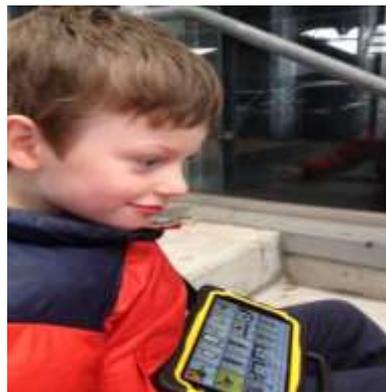
- Individualised Learning Plans (ILPs)

Use an electronic communication device to make requests and choices.

Theo is at the modelling stage when using his device. He can navigate to familiar/motivating items and can label them when requested with gestural and verbal.

Theo will request 'more' of a desired food item, object or activity using the 'more' symbol on his communication device, during at least two classroom sessions per day, following a verbal and gestural prompt (pointing to the symbol). This goal will be achieved when Theo demonstrates success with verbal prompts only, after 3 consecutive trials with 100% accuracy.

- Core word use – implemented at school

"I want to see the parrot," said Sophie.

Can I ride my tricycle?

Yes you can!

Transition to school

- Snapshot of me

- Personal communication dictionary

'A Snapshot of Me'

Child's name: Theo Greene
Teacher's name: Zoe
Diagnosis: Angelman Syndrome

RECEPTIVE LANGUAGE
-I can follow 1 step instructions with no extra prompt
-I can follow 2 step instructions with a gesture or repetition
-I can answer YES / NO questions by using my voice (mmm for yes) and shaking my head for no
-I need a few extra seconds to process your question or request before responding.
-I was recntly assessed by a psychologist for a study using MSEL and my receptive language scored 28 months of age.

MY INTERESTS
-I love music and dancing
-I love anything sensory. I particularly like vibration.
-I love animals (although am nervous of real ones when close eg dogs)
-I love trying to learn to jump on the trampoline.

CORE VOCABULARY
-I have been learning 1 core word per week eg help, in, go, stop
-We use the word in lots of different activities to get repetition for learning
MODELLING
-I learn new words when you use my talker to talk to me, called Modelling

EXPRESSIVE LANGUAGE
-I use an LR7 communication device. I have been using this for 18 months
-I use some KWS or approximations of signs eg help, more, shower, jump, toilet,dog,swim,biking,playground
-I use gestures eg wave, shake head, point, nod head, pat bottom,
DIFFICULTIES
-I find it hard to express when I am hungry, thirsty or need changing. I will grizzle
-When I am frustrated or want someones attention I sometimes throw things or hit.

MY TALKER
- Although I can say certain things with my talker, it is is not in front of me I forget to use it
-My favourite topics to talk about are motivating things eg listening to music, watching TV, animals, people I know

This is confidental document.

Personal Communication Dictionary Theo January 2017

What I do	What this might mean	What you should do
Wave	Hello / Goodbye	Return the gesture
Rapid arm flapping	I am excited/I like it	Say oh you like that / Model on my talker the word like or excited
Shake head	I am saying no	
	Sometimes I shake my head but I actually mean yes	Say are you sure?
Nod head I say mmm	I am saying Yes	
Pat my bottom	I have been to toilet in my nappy Infrequently, I am saying I need to go to toilet	Sit me on the toilet
Tapping/whacking someone on head	This is how I attempt to interact with another child/get their attention	Redirect me to wave hello or redirect to model Hello on my talker
Throwing/hitting	This could mean a few things: -I want your attention -I'm really excited -I've finished and need help transitioning to next task	Redirect Give me some attention
Hug a stranger	I'm saying hello	Redirect me to shake hands/wave hello
I say Mumma	This means Mum Sometimes I mean Dad	Say dada with me
I jiggle/bounce up and down	I want music and/or dancing	Ask me if I want music
I lie down on floor /couch	This does not necessarily mean I am tired.I need an adult to initiate an activity with me	Set me up with next activity

I chew my fingernails	I am getting tired	Let me have some quiet time e.g. read books
I squash/play with my food	I have trouble moving past sensory aspect of food. I might actually still be hungry	Set boundary of eating food properly
Do purposeful arm movements that look like a sign but I don't recognize it	Some of my signs are approximations/made up/copied off Sophie	Ask Mum what they mean
Use my talker but press buttons that aren't relevant to topic or intent	I am exploring my talker/learning symbolic language/motor planning the buttons	Model my talker to me when you talk to me. Provide encouragement to me to use my talker

Transition to school

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Tools2Talk+ app

Sophie's timetable on Tuesdays

Tuesday
Tu ☀

My timetable

Morning

breakfast	medicine	get dressed	backpack	bus	school	class
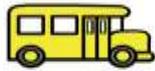
Lunch

class	Mum	Car	Gym	car		

Home

Dentist

Theo Goes To Dentist

dentist	sit in dental chair	open mouth	say ahhh
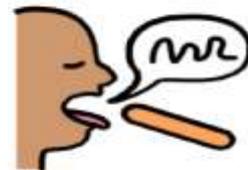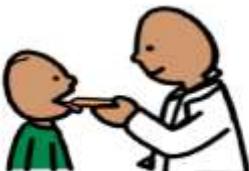
Look at teeth	Toothbrush	Finish	Let's go home

Social story – Going to camp
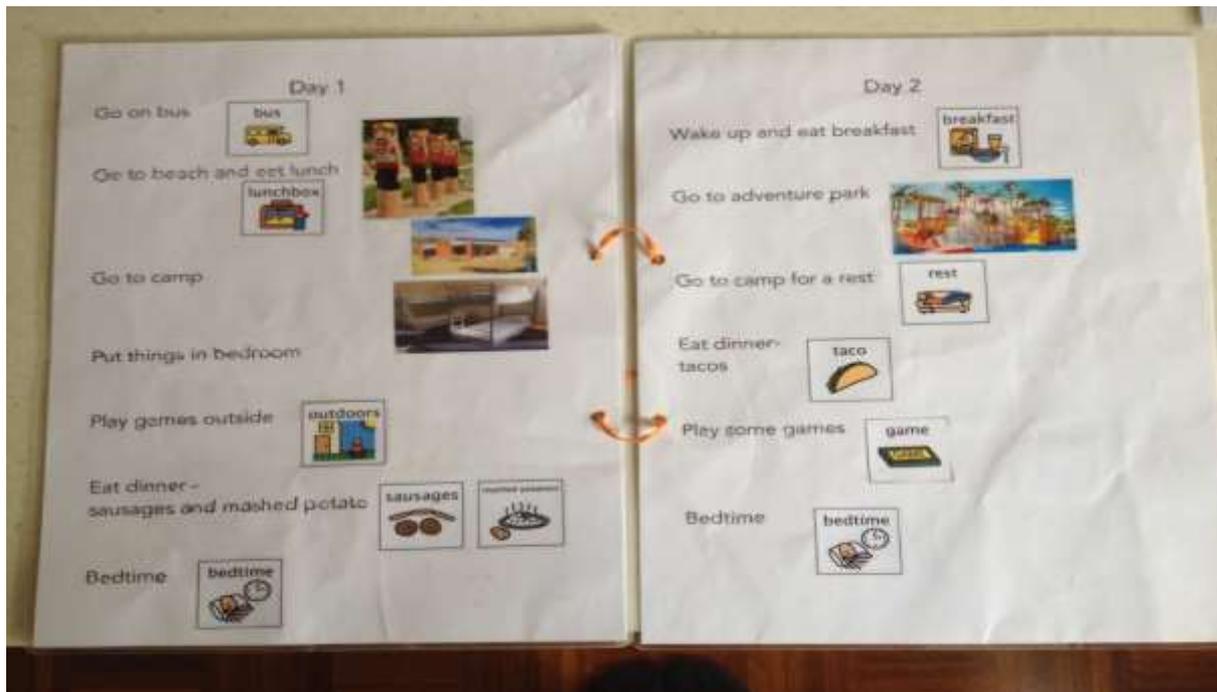
Sophie's Botox Treatment

Sore ankle

pain in ankle

Walking on toes

hospital

Sophie goes to hospital with Mummy and Daddy

doctor

medicine

sleep

Doctor wraps plaster on

Plaster cast

cast

cast

walk

Special shoe

school

Orthotic

Sophie will wear her cast to school

Foot walks flat

feel better

Sophies ankle will feel better

run

Sophie will be able to run and play better
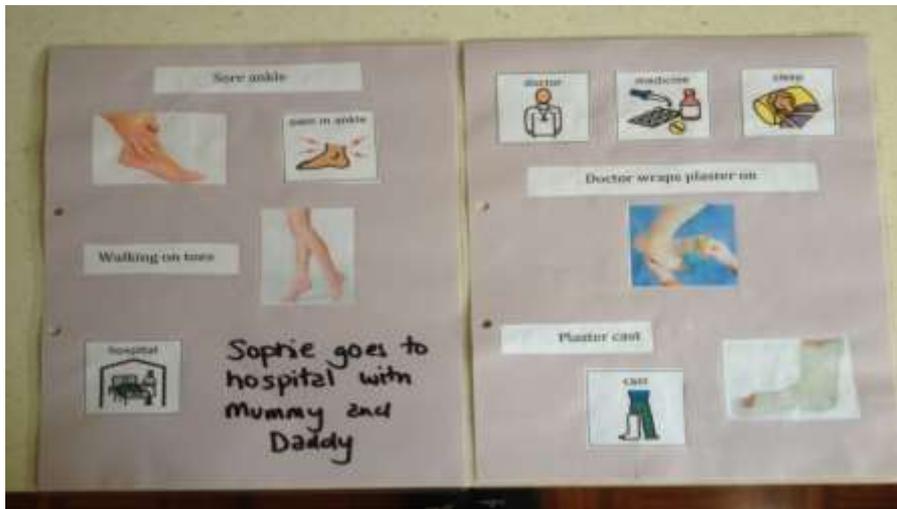
Toolbox of AAC Strategies

Robust speech device
–high tech

BIGmac
-high tech

Key Word Sign
-no tech

My Day Book
-low tech

Core Word Board
-low tech

Aided Language Display
-low tech

Therapist reflection on therapy process

- Parent takes lead role

- Collaboration

- True partnership

Our top tips for parents and therapists

- Learn about more about AAC
- Link into social media, list servs, websites
- Connect with other parents
- Develop good relationships with child's team
- Invest in tools to create own visuals
- Don't forget the benefits of low tech - creates interest from others

- For therapists - encourage and empower parents to problem solve and create own solutions

Sophie and Theo

- Systems in place to aid understanding of situations and manage behaviour

- Systems in place to learn language and to communicate

- High tech and low tech, key word sign

- Collaborative team around them

Apps

- Tools2Talk+ app

- Key Word Sign Australia app

Angelman Syndrome Association Australia

www.angelmansyndrome.org

Like us on Facebook

Our mission: *to support, inform, educate, network, foster research and to advocate for families affected by Angelman Syndrome*

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