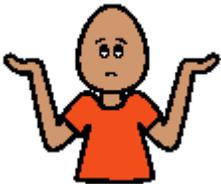
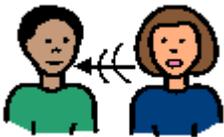


Indicators that somebody may need strategies to support their communication



If somebody has difficulties with **understanding**:

- The person might not respond to simple questions or commands
- The person may repeat back what has been said
- The person may appear to follow things that are in their routine, but anything out of their routine they have more difficulties.
- The person may give odd or out of context answers when asked a question.
- The person may become frustrated as they are not understanding what is happening.
- The person may become unresponsive due to being overloaded.



If somebody has difficulties with **expressing themselves**:

- The person may not be able to let you know what they want or need.
- The person may not try and express themselves as they have lost skills due to the environment being unresponsive.
- The person may be isolated as they cannot use their expressive skills to socialise with others.
- The person may be frustrated as they cannot express how they are feeling.



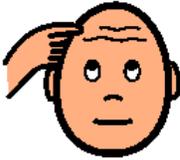
Communication difficulties can impact somebody's **Quality of Life**
For example:

- Communication difficulties can affect somebody's mood
- Communication difficulties can be an aspect that leads to challenging behaviour
- Communication difficulties can impact whether somebody is socially isolated.

COMMUNICATING SUCCESSFULLY WITH PEOPLE WITH A LEARNING DISABILITY

Step 1

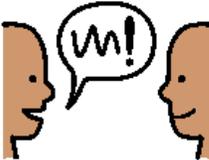
PREPARE



- If possible, find out about the person's communication
- Read their communication passport if they have one
- Think about the environment and reduce any distractions
- Think about where you sit/stand and make sure you're on the same level as the person so they can see you easily

Step 2

THINK ABOUT THE WORDS YOU USE



- Use the person's name to gain their attention before you start speaking
- Use everyday words and short sentences
- Talk about one idea at a time
- Say what you mean – don't use metaphors/idioms like 'pull your socks up' or 'right as rain' – these are confusing
- Try not to use negatives like 'isn't' or 'can't'. Say 'no' and then say what is happening
- Try not to use pronouns like 'he' 'it' 'they' – use names
- Avoid talking about 'next week', 'tomorrow', 'last year' – time concepts are really difficult to understand
- Remember that feelings are also really difficult to understand

Step 3

USE TOTAL COMMUNICATION



- Always use gesture and body language to illustrate what you're saying
- If you need to talk about feelings, use lots of body language to help the person understand what you're saying
- Try to use pictures, symbols and sign language to really help them understand what you're saying

Step 4

LISTEN

- Don't assume someone has understood just because they agree with you, nod or smile
- Give the person time to respond
- Look for non verbal responses as well as verbal responses – what are they telling you through their body language?
- Encourage the person to 'show you' as well as 'tell you' what they think