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The Power of Social Closeness

Using speech generating devices with people with aphasia

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Margaret's story



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Yooralla's AAC Services

- ComTEC
 - Advice and information about technology
- Aids and Equipment Program - Electronic Communication Devices Scheme
 - Funding scheme for SGDs

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Follow up procedure

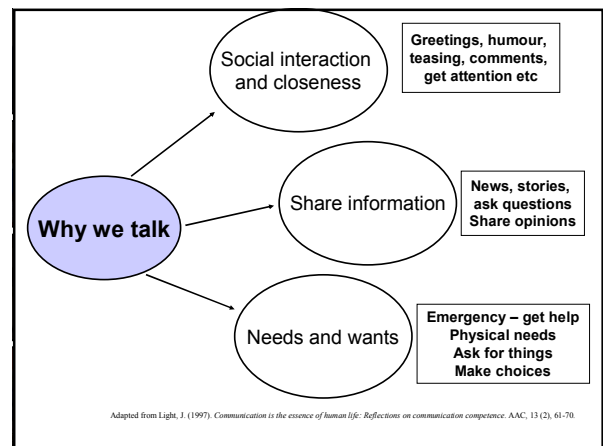
- In 2007 - people with Strokes:
 - 8 / 12 people did not achieve goals,
 - many had returned the device to AEP
- We noticed
 - Often no ongoing Speech Pathologist
 - Only "needs and wants" on the overlay

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Light's categories

- Expression of needs and wants
- Information transfer
- Social closeness
- Social etiquette

Light, J. (1997). *Communication is the essence of human life: Reflections on communication competence*. AAC, 13 (2), 61-70.



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Aims of the project

1. Promote the clients' social closeness with family, friends, peers and staff in NH
2. Reduce social isolation of people with aphasia

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Resources created:

- SGD overlays - 8 and 32 cells
 - Talking with family
 - Talking to NH staff
- a Training DVD on modelling use of the device

How are you? great to see you What do you think about the weather? How is your family?

cheap talk - general made by ComTEC, Yooralla ph 9362 6111

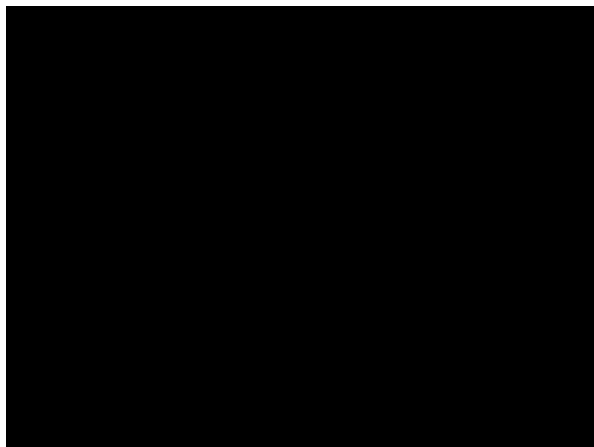
no good help thank you good

How are you? great to see you you look different you look good My News Family News Other news tell me more

no NO you look tired Is something wrong? How is your health? tell me about you tell me about the family tell me about work YES YES

no good I don't know I can't remember remember I love you good


you're way off different topic Ask me a yes/no question yes no getting close help thank you when will see you next?



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Participants


- 12 clients started, 8 completed project
- Stroke diagnosis: 6 / 8
- Nursing home - 6 / 8
- Ongoing SP - 3 / 8



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Factors we considered:


- Support available
- Personality and motivation
- Interest in technology
- Aphasia type and severity
- ESOL issues with family/staff
- Ability to operate the device



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Results


- 3 months after getting the device:
 - 2 / 8 - goals “in progress”
 - 6 / 8 - goals “not achieved”



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Negative influencing factors


- Limitations to training provided
- 2 = didn’t like the device
- 2 = had health problems
- 1 = NH staff couldn’t manage device
- 1 = severely hot weather, no air conditioning in the NH!



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Positive influencing factor


- Regular SP support
- 3 people with regular SP contact
 - 2 = goals in progress
 - 1 = changed device and now is achieving her goals



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What have we learned?

- Regular contact with a Speech Pathologist is optimal
- Lots of factors *ComTEC* can’t control
- Pre-made resources are helpful but not enough by themselves



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Where to from here?



- Continue to provide resources
- Discuss with clients the need for ongoing support to implement a SGD



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Download the overlays from www.yooralla.com.au/comtec.php

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