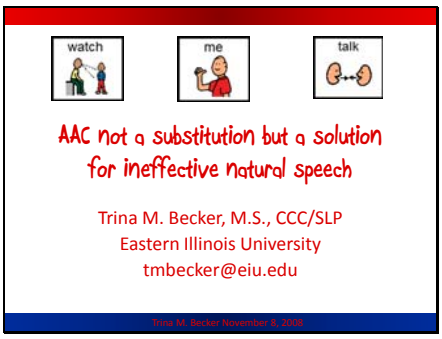
Slide 1



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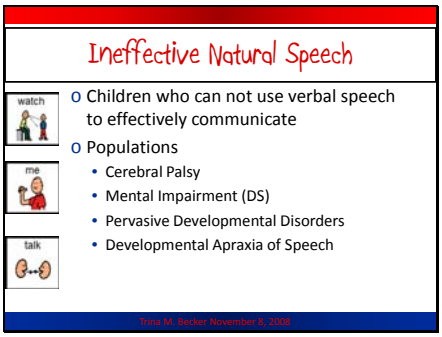

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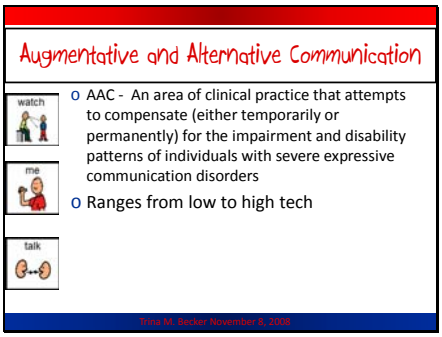

Slide 4

Benefits of AAC

- Provides an individual a means to communicate
- Facilitates learning & Increases participation
- Improves receptive & expressive language
- Facilitates speech
- Reduces frustration and behaviors

Slide 5

Children with Down Syndrome

- Are known to have higher receptive language than expressive language
- Have difficulties with articulation, making their speech difficult to understand
- Typically have strong visual skills
- Often have good potential for learning sight words

Slide 6

Questions regarding AAC

- Appropriate to use AAC?
- What about natural speech development?
- Do they have cognitive abilities to use AAC?
- Shouldn't we try other intervention methods first?

Slide 7

Answers

- From developmental perspective, AAC can be viewed as a tool to develop prelinguistic skills and set the stage for vocabulary development (Romski, Sevcik, Hyatt, & Cheslock, 2002)
- No studies support notion that AAC hinders speech. Studies do support natural speech development.

Slide 8

Answers

- Children with unintelligible speech can use AAC to further develop language skills
- AAC can be used with other modalities of communication

Slide 9

AAC + Children with Down Syndrome

- Good candidates for AAC
- AAC should not be sole means of communication
  - Should use multimodality approach
  - Should continue to target natural speech
  - Should be used to supplement natural speech and build language skills

Slide 10

AAC: Communication through symbols

- Symbols – "something that stands for something else" (Anderheiden & Yoder, 1986, pg. 15)
- Symbolic communication on most AAC systems consist of picture symbols
- Some researchers suggest that cognitive age of 18mths is when understanding of symbols occur. This is right before vocabulary growth spurt (18-24mths)

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Slide 11

Hierarchy of Picture symbols

*Symbols most commonly used

1. Objects
2. COPS
3. Colored photographs
4. Colored line drawings
   - PCS/Boardmaker picture symbols
   - Dynasyms
5. Black & white line drawings
6. Traditional orthography

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Slide 12

No Tech AAC systems

- No tech
  - PECS – Picture Exchange Communication System
  - Picture Communication
  - Communication boards

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Slide 13

Low Tech AAC systems

watch

me

talk

- Low tech
  - BIGmack
  - Italk 2
  - Step by step
  - Twin talk
  - Talking symbols
  - Talking photo album

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Mid Tech AAC systems

watch

me

talk

- Mid tech
  - 7 level communicator
  - GoTalk (4, 9, 12)
  - Super Talker

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High Tech AAC systems

watch

me

talk

- High tech
  - DynaVox V
  - M3
  - Springboard
  - Mercury II

**High tech systems need to be used at appropriate level

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Slide 16

Assessment for AAC

- Current needs for communication
- Symbolic skills – what pictures do they understand?

- Cognitive and Language skills
- Literacy skills & potential for literacy

Slide 17

Other Things to Consider in Device Selection

- Language and literacy skills
- Educational, vocational, recreational, and medical needs

- Current and future needs and skills
- Physical access abilities
- Important to involve family members and individuals in this process

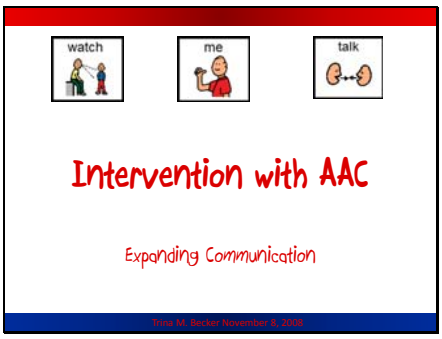
Slide 18

Where to go for help

- Company Representatives – Dynavox, Prentke Romich, Assistive Technology Inc., etc

- Diagnostic Centers
  - Illinois Assistive Technology Project
  - University clinics
  - School districts

Slide 19



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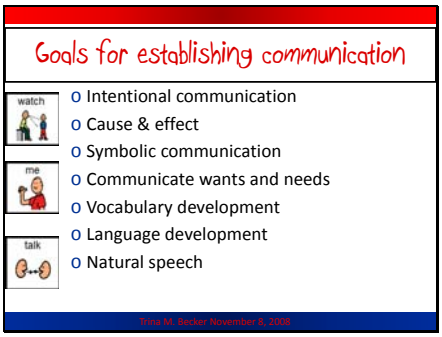

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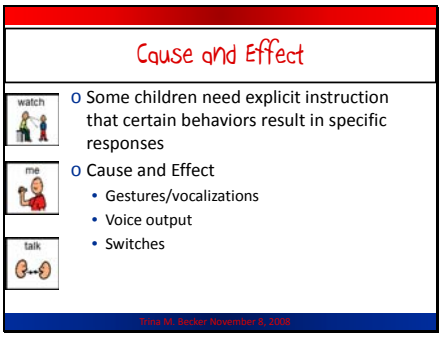


Slide 22

Communication of Wants + Needs

- Develop ability to communicate wants and needs
  - Choice making
  - Requesting

- Basic and essential skills of communication

- Need to know child's likes and dislikes!

Slide 23

Establish Ability to Make a Choice

- The development of preferences and a way to communicate them through nonsymbolic means is a necessary first step to choice making

- Choice making occurs when an individual indicates preference from 2 or more options, either spontaneously or when someone else offers

Slide 24

Teaching Offered Choice Making

- Opportunities
- Objects → Symbols
- natural environment

- Choice making Arrays
  - 2 preferred
  - 1 preferred, 1 nonpreferred
  - Preferred, blank/distractor

- Must always follow through with choice!

Slide 25

Types of Requests

1. Request object - "I want drink"
2. Request access to activity - Point to swing
3. Request more/continuation - Request more cookie, request music to continue
4. Request actions – "help", "all done", "go"

Slide 26

Strategies to teach requesting

- Time delay – preferred items are present, but access is delayed until request is made. No prompt by adult, teaches initiation.
- Interrupted Behavior Chain – routine is interrupted until child requests next item or continuation
- Mand-Model – Adult sets up situation with motivating items. Adult initiates with prompt "what do you want?"

Slide 27

Expanding language
Vocabulary Development

- Recognition – pair objects/actions/ideas with symbols (match)
- Comprehension – associating representation with a concept or label (identify)
- Use – using representation as a means of expression

Slide 28

Choosing Vocabulary

- Things to consider…
  - Age appropriateness
  - Functionality
  - Flexibility
  - Variety of communicative functions
    - Acceptance/rejection
    - Requesting
    - Socialization

Slide 29

Don't forget about social words!

- Greetings
- Social phrases - please/thank you
- Comments
- Turn-taking

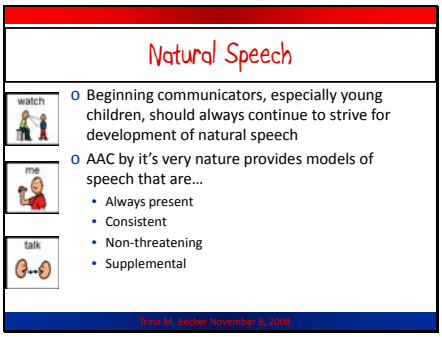
Slide 30

Further language expansion

- Increase sentence length
- Increase social language
  - Greetings
  - Comments
  - Conversation skills
- Increase initiation
- Communicate whatever, whenever, with whomever!!

Slide 31

Slide 32



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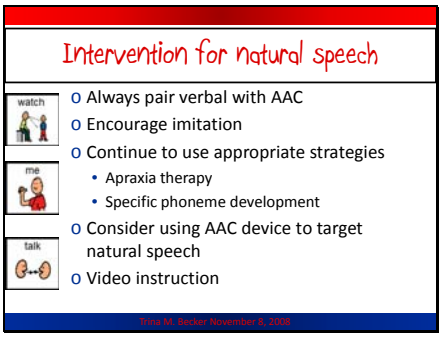

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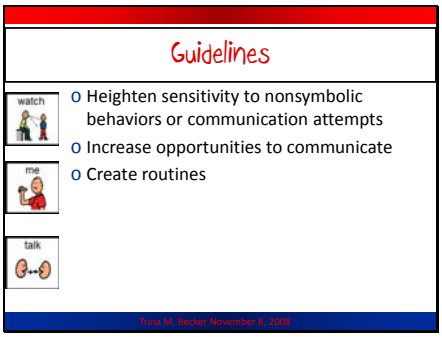

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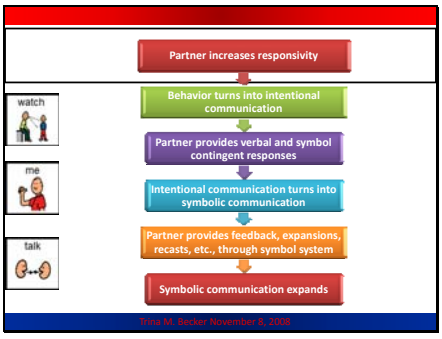

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Resources

- The Source for AAC by Linguisystems
- Handbook of Augmentative and Alternative Communication – Glennen & DeCoste
- Augmentative and Alternative Communication: Management of Severe Communication Disorders in Children and Adults – Beukelmen & Mirenda
- Exemplary Practices for Beginning Communicators: Implications for AAC – Reichle, Beukelman, Light
- Johnston, Reichle, & Evans. (2004) Supporting Augmentative and Alternative Communication Use by Beginning Communicators with Severe Disabilities. American Journal of Speech-Language Pathology , Vol. 13, 20-30
- Cress & Marvin (2003) Common Questions about AAC Services in Early Intervention

Slide 38

AAC Companies

- Ablenet – low to Mid tech devices
- DynaVox – High tech devices
- Assistive Technology Inc. – mid to high tech devices
- Prentke Romich – High tech devices
- Mayer-Johnson – Boardmaker, low to high tech devices

Slide 39

Web Resources

- Patti King-DeBaun – www.creativecommunicating.com
- Caroline Musselwhite – www.aacintervention.com
- Linda Burkhart – www.Lburkhart.com
- www.closingthegap.com
- www.magickeys.com/books/
- www.speakingofspeech.com
- www.mayerjohnson.com