

Better Together

*Incorporating Communication Partners
Into AAC Device Training*

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Financial Disclosure

Caitlin Mueller is an employee of Lingraphica and thereby receives financial compensation from the Lingraphica Company.

Audrey Holland is a paid consultant for the Lingraphica Company.

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Learning Objectives

- Describe the demographics of caregivers and the challenges they face
- State evidence regarding the impact of communication partner involvement on success in AAC device use
- Identify clinical best practices for increasing communication partner involvement in AAC use
- Name resources available to support caregivers

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Agenda

- Who are communication partners?
- Benefits of communication partner involvement
- What to teach and how to teach it
- Special Considerations
- Resources available from Lingraphica
- Q&A

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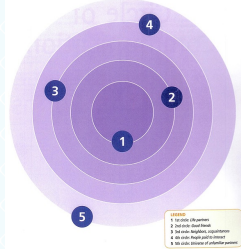
Meet the Communication Partners

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Communication Partners

- Caregivers
- Communication Partners
- Social Networks Inventory – Circles of Communication Partners (Blackstone & Hunt-Berg, 2003)
- Beyond friends and family



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Lingraphica's Aphasia Caregiver Report

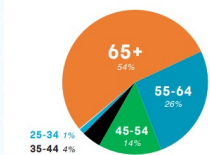


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Who Are The Caregivers?

What is your age?



What is your gender?

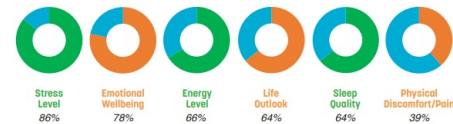


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Impact of Caregiving

Percent who report worsening...



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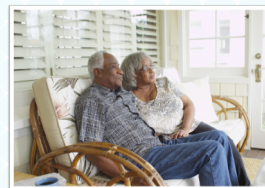
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Benefits of Communication Partner Involvement

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Benefits of CP Involvement in AAC



- Evidence of increased success (Simmons-Mackie, 2013; Binger & Kent-Walsh, 2012)
- Unique knowledge
- Carryover and generalization
- Partner-dependent users
- Communication partner attitudes critical for success (Beukelman, 2002)

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Barriers to Communication Partner Training



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Common Barriers

- Reasons SLPs don't provide CP training:
 - CP not in attendance
 - CP refusal
 - No involved communication partner
 - Limited treatment time
 - SLP not comfortable providing training
- Communication Partners who "do not accommodate"



(Kosch, 2019)



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When CPs Aren't On Board

- Counseling
 - Are you sure it's the device?
 - What is the root of the concern?
- Education
- Demonstrate the need



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SLP Pitfalls

- Focus on what partner is doing wrong
- Targeting too many behaviors
- Targeting too many settings/situations
- Failing to demonstrate link between partner behaviors and client outcomes



(Binger & Kent-Walsh, 2012)



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Diving In to CP Training



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Goal Behaviors

Instead of this:

- Too many conversational turns
- Only yes/no questions
- Few opportunities for initiation/response
- Interrupting
- Focus on technology

Encourage this:

- Set the environment
- Allow time
- Confirm understanding
- Create "shared communication spaces"
- Honesty about communication breakdowns



(Thiessen & Beukelman, 2013)

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Setting the Stage

- Set expectations and adjust beliefs
 - Attendance
 - No miracles
 - Accept less than perfect communication
 - Shared communication responsibility
- Allow room for grief
- Stages of behavior change



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Teaching Device Basics

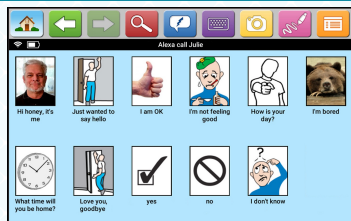


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- Collaboration on device customization
 - Mutual interests/needs
 - "Home slang" and authentic messaging
- Basic programming
 - Adding, changing, deleting icons

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Mutual Needs/Interests



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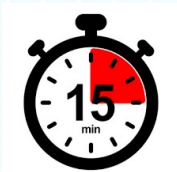
Mutual Needs/Interests



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Teaching Strategies



- Select skills to target
 - Start small and specific
- Practice with client before teaching CP
- Expand after initial success

Binger & Kent-Walsh, 2012

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Teaching Strategies

- Identify specific partner behaviors
- Hierarchical cuing
 - Expectant delay
 - Natural cue
 - Point at device
 - Aided modeling
- Avoid focus on "incorrect" partner behaviors

Binger & Kent-Walsh, 2012

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ImPAACT Program

- Target specific skills
 - Expectant delay
 - Wh- question asking
 - Verbal prompting
 - Aided modeling
 - Contingent responding
- Instructional techniques
 - Video review
 - Modeling
 - Role play
 - Verbal rehearsal
 - Coached practice



Kent-Walsh & Binger, 2013

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ImPAACT Program

1. Pre-test and commitment
2. Strategy description
3. Strategy demonstration
4. Verbal practice
5. Controlled practice and feedback
6. Advanced practice and feedback
7. Post-test and commitment
8. Generalization



Kent-Walsh & Binger, 2013

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Teaching Persistence

- Presume competence
- Be persistent when breakdowns occur
- Decide together if it's time to move on



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Special Considerations



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Cultural Considerations

- Cultural expectations
- Appropriateness of training environment/mode
- Review language/vocab and images



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Remote Training

- Evidence of success
(Quinn, Beukelman, & Thiessen, 2011)
- Communication partner's role as a technology assistant



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Resources for Communication Partners



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Lingraphica's Commitment to CPs

- Device trial training and support
- Ongoing training and support
- Virtual Connections



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Additional Resources



- Support groups
- Counseling
- Food prep and support
- Respite care
- Family Caregiver Alliance



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Conclusion

- Learning about communication partners
- Benefits of CP involvement
- Strategies for CP training
- Special Considerations
- Resources for communication partners



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Next Steps

- Schedule a free consultation:
<https://www.aphasia.com/schedule-a-consult/>
- Join us August 11th at 1pm (Eastern) for:
Unpacking PPA, Treatment, and AAC Strategies



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Earn CEUs for Today's Course

- Visit aacdevice.aphasia.com/ceu-credit
- Enter Offering number **0740001**
- To earn CEUs, you must complete learning assessment and evaluation. You must complete these steps within 48 hours.



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Questions & Answers



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Thank You!

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