

Communication with Patients with Aphasia: An Interdisciplinary Approach

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Financial Disclosure

Teresa Thompson is an employee of Lingraphica and thereby receives financial compensation from the Lingraphica Company.



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Learning Objectives

- Define Aphasia and name three common characteristics
- Identify two ways that an interdisciplinary approach improves patient care for the Person With Aphasia (PWA)
- Identify three types of communication supports and give an example of each
- Recall two ways an AAC device can be used with an Occupational Therapist to achieve session goals



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Agenda

- Definition of Aphasia
- Interdisciplinary Aphasia Advocacy
- Communication Strategies and Supports
 - No Tech, Light Tech, High Tech AAC
- Case Study
- Device Trials
- Questions and Answers



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Definition of Aphasia



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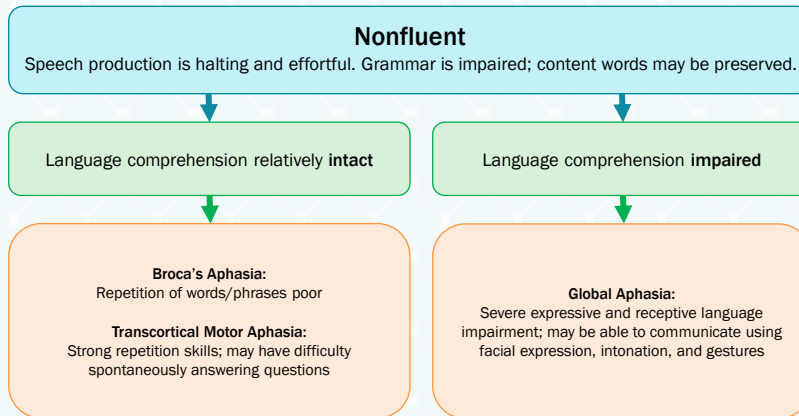
Aphasia

- Acquired language disorder
- Often results from stroke or brain injury
- Affects ability to process, use, and/or understand language
 - Speaking, listening, reading, and/or writing
- Many types of aphasia
 - Nonfluent, fluent, global
- Intelligence and cognition are not affected

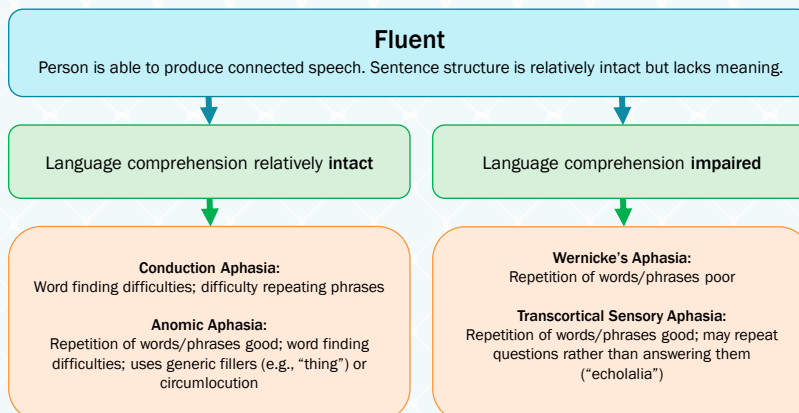


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Characteristics of Aphasia: Nonfluent



Characteristics of Aphasia: Fluent



Interdisciplinary Aphasia Advocacy: Why is it important?



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Prevalence of Aphasia



- Approximately 2 million people in the U.S. have aphasia
- Approximately 180,000 diagnosed every year
- About 1/3 of people s/p stroke have aphasia
- 86% of people have never heard the term “aphasia”



(National Aphasia Association, 2020)

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Communication Bill of Rights

Fundamental communication rights:

- Interact socially, maintain closeness, and build relationships
- Make comments/share opinions
- Express personal preferences/feelings
- Request/reject desired objects, actions, events, or choices
- Make choices from meaningful alternatives
- Access interventions/supports that improve communication
- Have access to functioning AAC/other AT services and devices at all times



(Brady et al, 2016)

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World Health Organization



- Assistive technology:
 - Enables people to live healthy, productive, independent, and dignified lives
 - Reduces need for formal health and support services, long-term care and work of caregivers
- Without assistive technology:
 - Exclusion and isolation



(World Health Organization, 2018)

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Improve Patient Care



Patients without adequate communication:

- Three times more likely to have preventable adverse events in acute care (Bartlett et al, 2008)
- Report greater dissatisfaction with their care (Hoffman et al, 2005)



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Improve Patient Care



- Healthcare professionals report dreading, limiting, or avoiding talking with PWA (Carreghar et al, 2021)
- PWA report being excluded from healthcare conversations (Tompkins et al, 2013)
- Reducing communication barriers could prevent over 600,000 adverse events annually (Bartlett et al, 2008)



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Implications for Rehabilitation Team

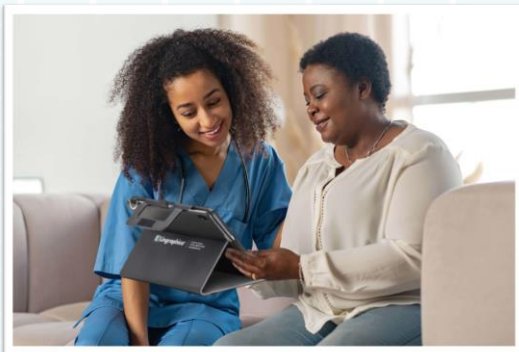
- AAC systems can reduce participation restrictions for people with complex communication needs
- Provision and use of AAC systems is influenced by environmental and personal factors as well as features of a person's body function
- SLPs may need to collaborate with a large multidisciplinary team to successfully introduce AAC systems



(Moorcroft et al., 2018)

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Patient Centered Goals



Collaborative goal-setting

- Can be challenging to elicit from PWA
- False assumption that this population cannot participate due to communication difficulties
- Questionable accuracy for proxy responses
- Adapting standardized measures is often necessary so that PWA can make their goals known



(Berger et al., 2017; Escher et al., 2018)

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Communication Strategies and Supports



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Definition of AAC

“Augmentative and Alternative Communication”



Augmentative
Adding TO speech



Alternative
Used INSTEAD OF speech

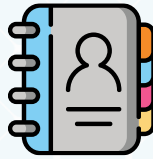


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Types of AAC



No Tech



Light Tech



High Tech



"Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC)", ASHA

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Aphasia Focused Communication Tips

- Minimize distractions/ background noise
- Keep communication simple, but adult
- Use several modes of communication
- Allow time for a response
- Talk *with* the person who has aphasia, not *for* them
- Establish topic, indicate when topic changes
- Present ideas one at a time
- Confirm understanding throughout
- Don't insist on perfect word production



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No Tech Communication



- Gestures
- Facial expressions and body language
- Establish if there is a reliable Y/N response
 - Head nod/shake
 - Thumbs up/Thumbs down
- Ask yes/no questions
- Description of a word or use of synonym



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Light Tech Communication

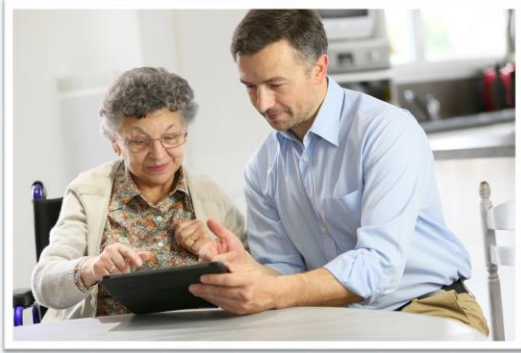


- Communication Boards
 - Topic boards, Alphabet boards, Rating Scales, Pain Scales, Y/N boards
- Pen and Paper
- Key Word Writing
- Pictures
- Interest Inventory
- Communication book



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High Tech Communication



- Apps
 - SmallTalk
 - Sono Flex Lite
 - Spoken
 - GoTalk Now Lite
 - TouchChat HD – Lite
- Dedicated Speech Generating Devices



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Lingraphica's Free Apps

SmallTalk



- Communication Apps
 - Activities of Daily Living
 - Conversational Phrases
 - ICU
 - Frases de Conversación
- Practice Apps
 - Mouth Position Videos
 - Oral Motor Exercises
 - Dysphagia



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Lingraphica AAC Devices



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Lingraphica AAC Devices

- Three sizes
- Multimodal communication
- English & Spanish
- Pre-customized vocabulary
- Built-in therapy and practice
- Internet and Zoom connectivity
- Multiple accessories available
- Evidence based



 **Lingraphica®**

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Accessories Available from Lingraphica



Rugged Case
Provides extra protection and multiple viewing angles. For tablets only.



Wireless Keyboard
Lightweight, compact, and slim. It's easy to bring with you wherever you go.



Bluetooth Speaker
For auditory deficits or communicating from afar. Delivers high quality from up to 100ft away.



EZ Eyes Keyboard
For those who need a large print, high contrast, wired keyboard.



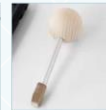
Standard Mouse
For navigation and icon selection. Available with or without cord.



The Joystick
For fine motor deficits. Responds to light touch. Available with acorn, T-bar, or foam ball knobs.



The Trackball Mouse
Lets you control the cursor with your fingers or hands instead of needing to move the wrist or arm.



Ball Grip Stylus
For anyone who has difficulty holding a small object, but who can firmly grasp something larger with their hand.



T-Grip Stylus
For anyone who exhibits muscle lightness (spasticity), and who can comfortably grasp larger objects with their hand.



Flexible Stylus
This stylus can be used straight or can bend (as pictured) to adapt to your hand shape or other gripping needs.



Flexible Stylus with Strap
Features a strap and can be used straight or can bend to add to your hand shape or other gripping needs.



Weighted Stylus
A good option for arthritis or hand tremors. Features wide barrel grip and added weight.



Extended Stylus
The extended grip is 7.3 inches in length, lightweight, and prevents the hand from touching or blocking the screen.



Tether
Keep your stylus attached to your device using this 15" elastic tether. Attaches to the device's headphone jack.



Adaptive Equipment



Wheelchair Mount*



Wall Mount*



Bed Mount*



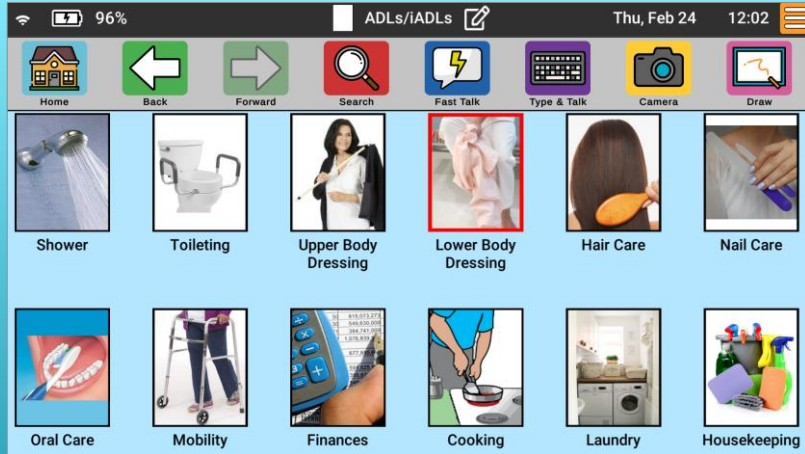
Table Stand*



Floor Stand*

*Available for sale devices only





Device Use Within a Session



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Device Use Within a Session



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Device Use Within a Session



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Case Study



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Case Study

Eva, 78-year-old female, 2 months s/p CVA. R side hemiparesis with upper extremity spasticity and severe aphasia, with difficulty both expressing herself and understanding complex oral and written language.

- PLOF: Lived alone, volunteered at local library, loved to cook, play bingo, and socialize with friends.
- Returned to her apartment following discharge from inpatient rehabilitation with check-in assist from daughter.



Berger et al., 2017

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Initial OT Evaluation

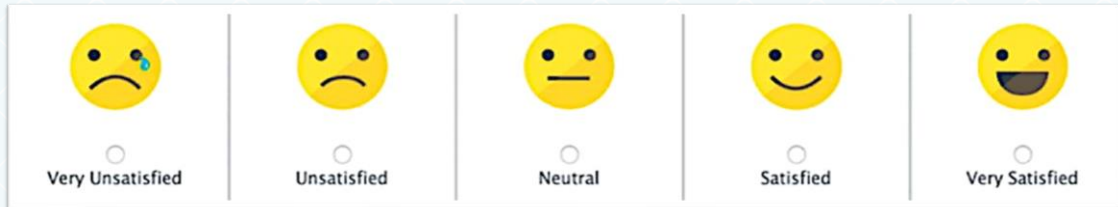
- OT performed environmental and ADL, IADL and leisure assessment
- Used successive close-ended Y/N questions, verifying the initial responses with daughter to check reliability in quiet environment
- Activity Card Sort (Baum & Edwards, 2008)
 - Sorted into Y/N piles in response to “Did you do this activity before your stroke?”
 - For activities identified, OT presented follow-up question: “Do you do it now?”
- Eva chose 5 meaningful activities from the “given up” pile
 - Preparing meals, doing laundry, doing dishes, playing bingo, and visiting with friends



Berger et al., 2017

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Initial OT Evaluation



Berger et al., 2017

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AAC Topics of Choice

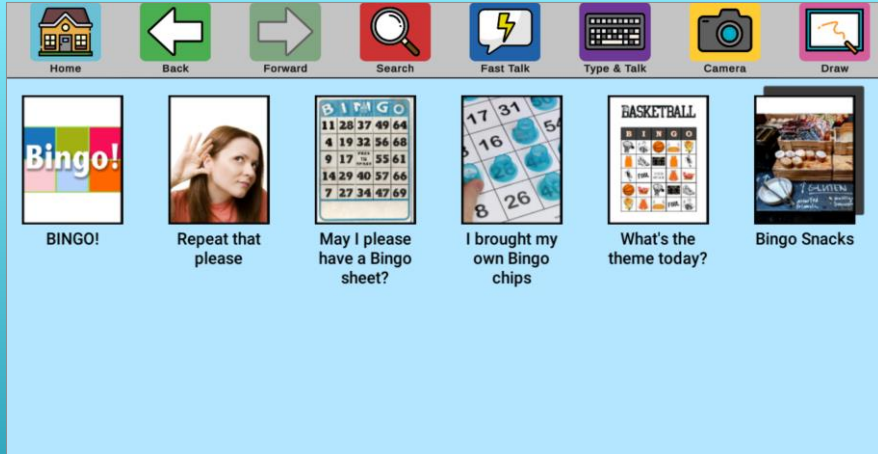


...Life participation IS NOT about basic needs or medical issues



Fried-Oken et al., 2015

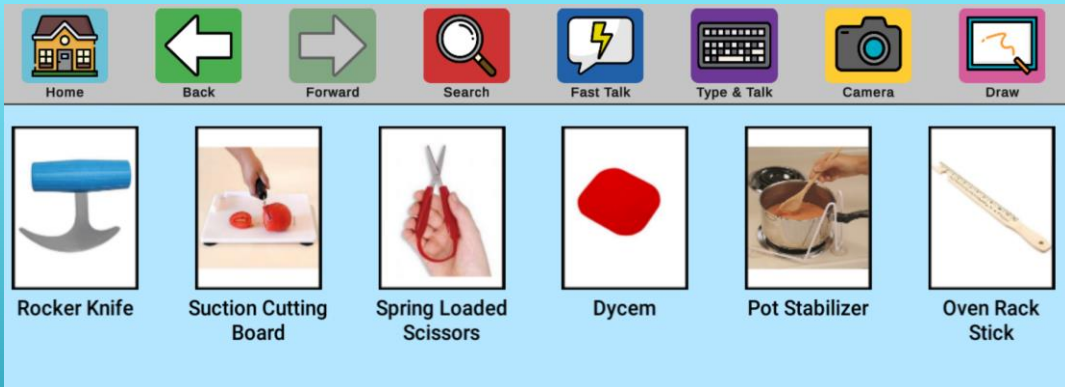
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Device Customization



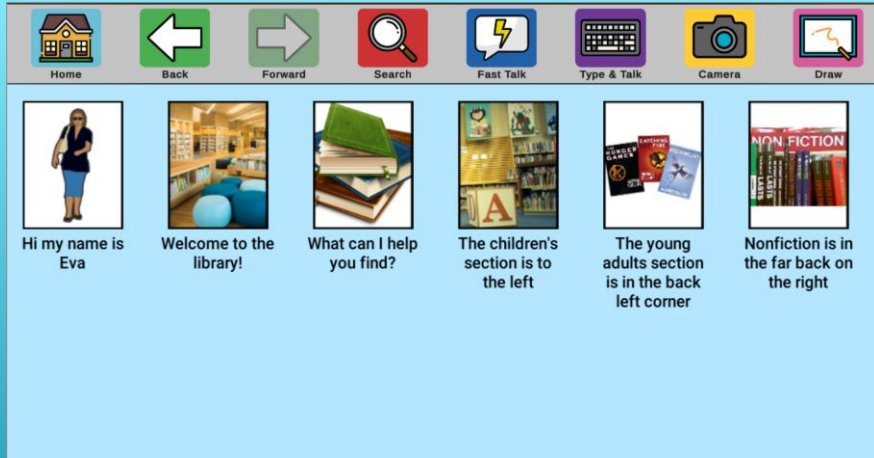
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Device Customization



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Device Customization



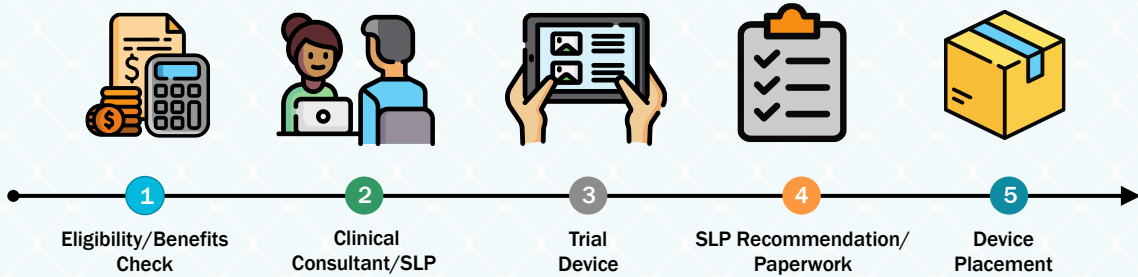
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Device Trials



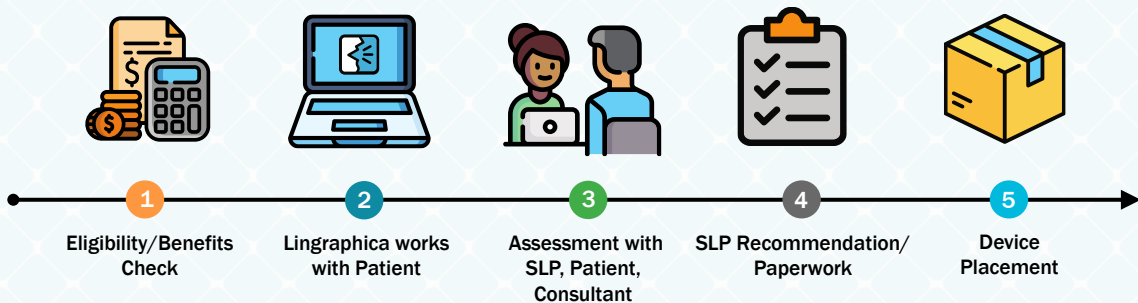
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AAC Device Trials – The Process



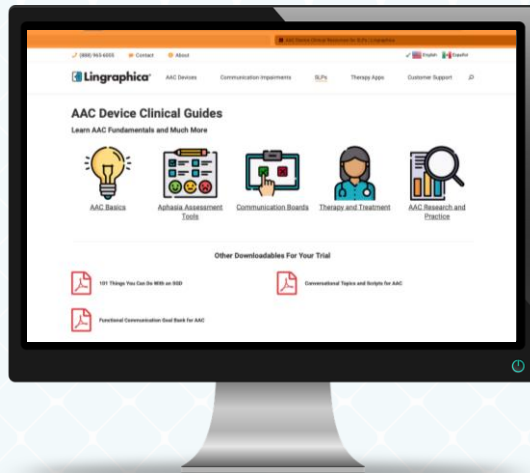
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Patient-Initiated Trials



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Website Resources



www.lingraphica.com

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Virtual Connections



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Conclusion

- Definition of Aphasia
- Interdisciplinary Aphasia Advocacy
- Communication Strategies and Supports
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Next Steps

- Watch On-Demand: *Using Lingraphica AAC Devices: Fundamentals for Occupational Therapists*
- Get hands on!
 - Schedule a live device demo
 - We will provide a loaner AAC device



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Earn CEUs for Today's Course

- Return to learn.aphasia.com
- Go to your learning center
- Look in the "current" tab and find this course
- Launch post-work (learning assessment and course eval)
- When finished, it will show in "completed" tab
- Please complete within 48 hours

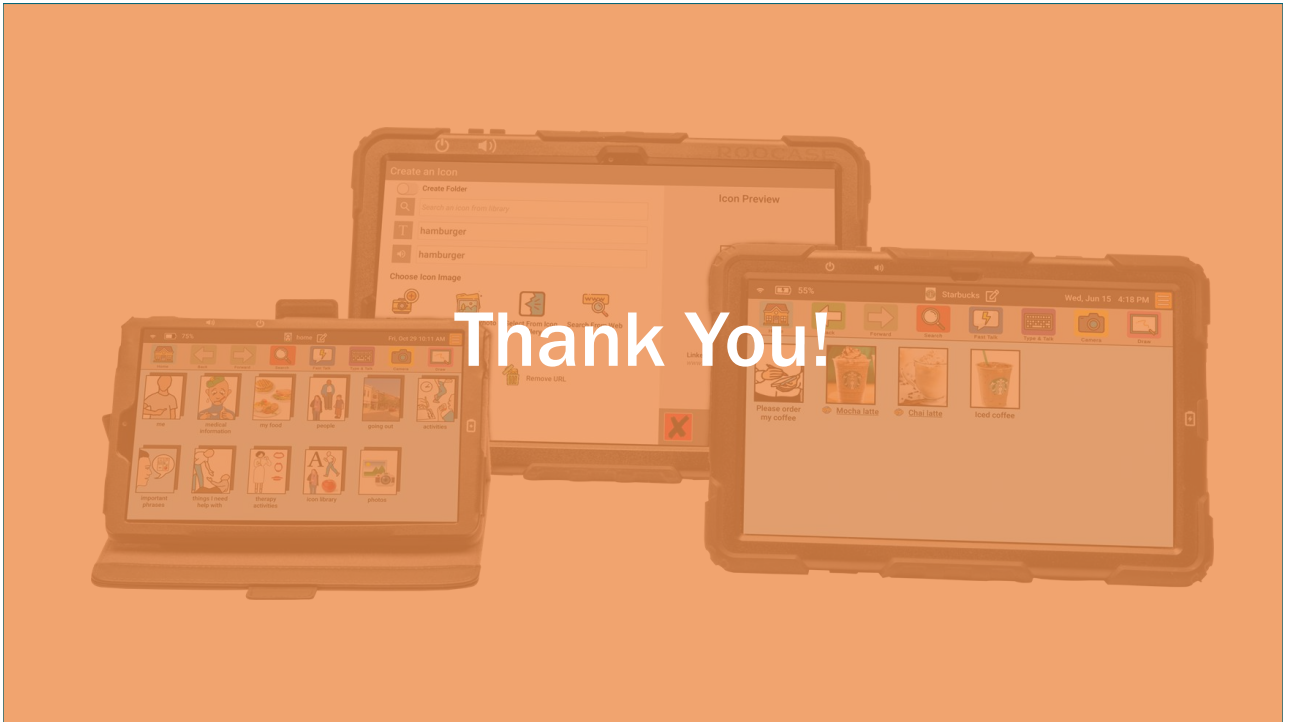


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Questions & Answers



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Thank You!

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