


COMMUNICATION AND ASD

Alex Kelly



Alex Kelly



- Speech and Language Therapist
- 23 years experience in NHS
- 13 years in the NHS in Hampshire
- 8 years managing SLT services
- Set up Alex Kelly Ltd in 2007



Alex Kelly Ltd



- **Training and consultancy** in communication & social skills around the UK and abroad
- **Speech Therapy** - provide SLT into 38 schools in Hampshire, Dorset, Surrey & London & offer 1:1 SLT
- **Speaking Space** - Day Service for adults with LD or autism



WHY IS COMMUNICATION SO IMPORTANT?



The typical child...




- 5-7% of 5 year olds entering school have significant communication difficulties

• Bercow et al 2008




Young offenders...



- 60% have a communication disability
- 90% have a social skills difficulties

• Bryan 2004
• Butler et al 2012



SEMH or challenging behaviour...



- 71% have some difficulties with their comprehension
- 86% have narrative difficulties

• Benner et al 2002
• Butler et al 2012



Quality of life...




- Children with communication difficulties struggle to form relationships & therefore experience a poorer quality of life
- They are often rejected by their peers

• Crawford et al 2005
• Warnes et al 2005




Success in future...



- Social competence is a critical variable in predicting whether someone will be successful later on in life
- 80% of people who fail at work do so because they do not relate well to others

• Denham et al 2001
• Rubin et al 2002





So communication is important...



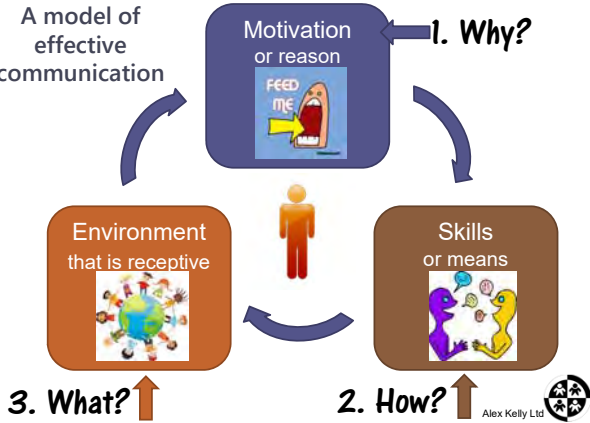
- Behaviour and mental health
- Quality of life and making friends
- Employment and success



A MODEL OF EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION


A model of effective communication



1. Why? → Motivation or reason (FEED ME)

2. How? → Skills or means

3. What? → Environment that is receptive





EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

verbigerative
mendacious
brokerage | quotient
serpiginous



Alex Kelly Ltd

5 TOP TIPS

MY 5 TOP TIPS TO EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION



Alex Kelly Ltd


1 Why

TOP TIP 1 CONSIDER THE 'WHY'




Alex Kelly Ltd

A few thoughts



- We must ask "WHY?"....
- They may have learnt to compensate
- They may be reacting to a situation / people
- They may be telling us something else




Alex Kelly Ltd

Jessie's diagnosis

'The more I understood it, the better I felt because it explains why I did what I did and why I was different'


'I felt good I had a diagnosis because **people could start to understand why I do the things I do and get upset with the 'stupid little things' that people call it**

Jessie needs us to understand her and her autism and to understand WHY she behaves or communicates the way she does




Alex Kelly Ltd

2





TOP TIP 2 THINK ABOUT WHAT YOU ARE SAYING



Alex Kelly Ltd



Things to look out for...

- Word level?
 - Literal language
 - Negatives
 - Time
 - Emotions
 - Jokes

And...

If we are unaware that a person has difficulties in understanding verbal information, we may interpret inappropriate or bizarre responses as challenging behaviour.

Think before you speak




- Do you know how much someone understands?
- Use simple language & say what you mean
- No metaphors, no sarcasm
- Take time... use their name, pause, repeat
- Remember at times of stress / anxiety, their level of comprehension will drop







TOP TIP 3 THINK ABOUT HOW YOU ARE SAYING IT


Communication skills

Non verbal behaviour	Verbal behaviour
Body Language	Conversational skills
The way we talk	

93% NON VERBAL

55% BODY LANGUAGE
38% THE WAY YOU TALK
7% VERBAL BEHAVIOUR



Speaker's Impact

Albert Mehrabian 1971

Category	Percentage
How you look	55%
How you sound	38%
What you say	7%

Dr. Mehrabian, UCLA

We have been educated to believe that our words are of paramount importance...

But it is the 'silent' language of our nonverbal behaviour that will make people want to listen to us and believe us.

Alex Kelly Ltd

First impressions...

Most people form an initial impression in 7 seconds

Alex Kelly Ltd

The 3 'biggies'...

Alex Kelly Ltd

Think about how you say it

- Your body language is over half of your communication... truth will out ☺
- Using gesture & signing helps understanding and reduces how much you talk

Alex Kelly Ltd

A little bit about signing... why sign?

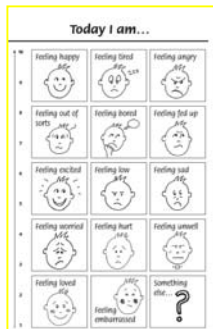
- It helps people to understand what you are saying
- It gives them an alternative to speech
- It can help develop verbal communication

Alex Kelly Ltd

TOP TIP 4 THINK ABOUT THE USE OF VISUALS

Alex Kelly Ltd

Think about the use of visuals

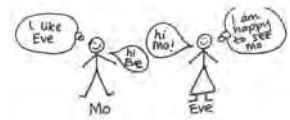


- Do you use them?
- Are they helpful?
- Are they distracting?
- Used well they will help children and adults understand a task, help them to express their needs and reduce anxiety

Alex Kelly Ltd



Consider alternative methods



Alex Kelly Ltd



TOP TIP 5 THINK ABOUT THE CHILD'S ENVIRONMENT

Alex Kelly Ltd



Think about the environment...



- Is communication being affected by their senses?
- Is there sensory overload?
- Is someone sensitive to a particular sense?
- Consider seating, colour/patterns, perfume, noise etc
- Is there too much talking?

Alex Kelly Ltd



Think about routine... be predictable



- Structure versus unstructured time
- Develop opportunities for communication – feelings board, narrative cards
- The ability to just sit and talk is hard and needs developing

Alex Kelly Ltd



I am different but not less

I live in a world that is willing to adjust to me

Jess Taylor 2015

Alex Kelly Ltd





THANK YOU FOR LISTENING

alex@alexkelly.biz

www.alexkelly.biz

02380 987134

