

Michigan Alliance for Families

Youth Self-Determination Series

Series 2-Session 1: Self-Determination, Self-Advocacy & Communication Handout

Self-Determination

- Being in control of you
- Making your own decisions and getting needed supports
 - (Supported Decision Making)
- Ability to problem-solve, and make decisions and choices
- Knowing your strengths and areas of need



Self-Advocacy

- Important part of self-determination and gaining independence
- Know what you want and what is possible for you
- Understand you are at the center of planning for your life
- Have more control of you
- Make life decisions and know who can help you (supported decision making)
- Understand your disability, your strengths, your challenges
- Know what you need (not just what you want) and are willing to be flexible and compromise
- Know you have legal rights
- Are able to communicate (speak-up) for yourself and make decisions about your life

Communication-very important to self-advocacy

Communication is...

- Getting and sending messages to other people
- Verbal, non-verbal, both
- 2-way: between 2 or more people
- Communicate our thoughts and ideas to understand each other

How People Communicate

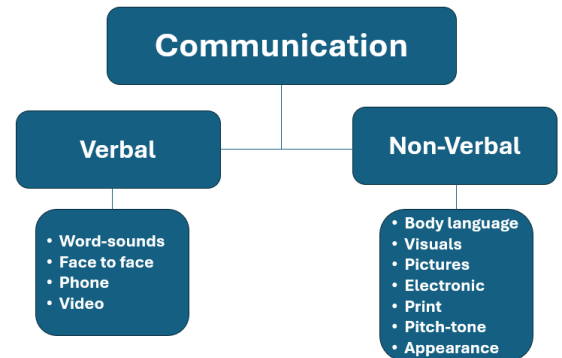
- Verbally
- Non-Verbally

Verbal Communication

- Words or sounds
- How we feel or think
- What and how we say things out loud

Non-Verbal Communication

- Communication without speaking words
- We read other's body language and they read ours
- Communication without speaking words
- Posture, gestures, tone position, and others
- Visuals, pictures, electronic, print, pitch and tone, appearance
- Pictures, graphics, print
- Sign language



Electronic Communication

- Electronic devices examples
 - Augmentative and alternative communication (AAC)
 - Phones

2-Way Communication

- Communication is like a **volleyball game**, it goes back-and-forth
- One is talking or communicating, one is listening
- You take a turn, I take a turn
- Someone communicates something, and someone else responds with text or visuals
- Applies the same to people who do not use words as their way of communication



1-Way Communication

- Listener does not get a chance to talk-they are not included
- They might get bored (because they are not doing any of the talking)
- They leave the conversation
- May think the other person does not care about what they have to say

Communication Partner

- Who you are communicating with or talking to, and who is listening or responding
 - Talking to your mom (your mom is your communication partner)
 - Talking to your boss (your boss is your communication partner)
 - Talking to your friend (your friend is your communication partner)

Topics

- Something you are talking about
- Stay on topic when talking

Common Interests

- Something you like or like to talk about
- Something the other person likes or likes to talk about
- Is the topic of conversation
 - Examples: weather, hobbies, interests, work, where you like to eat, what you like to eat, playing games, anime, playing or watching sports
- Things you can talk about and do together

Questions and Comments

2-way communication includes:

- Comments: **telling** something
- Questions: **asking** something
- Make 1-2 comments **ABOUT THE TOPIC**, then ask 1 question **ABOUT THE TOPIC**



Question Starters

Who, What, Where, When Why, How Did, Do...