

Communicate Well

Always assume intelligence. Students may be able to understand, yet not able to use words, read, or write in typical ways.



Seek

Seek clues using your experience:

- Notice when a student's behavior changes. If someone who normally paces sits quietly, they may be telling you something.
- Consider what their tone, inflection, and body language are telling you.



Phrase

Phrase questions or statements:

- Ask questions only when the student has a choice and limit choices.
- Ask closed-questions and suggest responses. Do you want this or that?
- Use first/then statements.
- Avoid abstract language, joking, slang, and idioms.



Speak

Speak with more than words:

- Use positive body language, gestures, and positive facial expressions.
- Speak at an appropriate age level.
- Be confident and direct. Never yell or scold.
- Be patient to wait for an answer.



Learn

Learn the language:

- Students may repeat words and phrases they just heard. (echolalia)
- Students may repeat what they heard in a movie or cartoon. (scripting)
- Students may point to pictures. (Picture Exchange Communication).
- Students may use words or gestures unique to their family.