Involving children with severe speech and language difficulties in and out of our classroom in the early years

Through Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC)

ECD Knowledge Building Seminar

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Involving children with severe speech difficulties in and out of our classroom in the early years

- The South African education system has witnessed progressive legislative and policy reforms to address inequalities of the past.
- One of these reforms is access to education for learners with disabilities including those who cannot talk.
- In 2001, government introduced a policy that will ensure access to quality education for children with disabilities - The inclusive education policy.
Involving children with severe speech difficulties in and out of our classroom in the early years

• One of the commitments the South African Government makes is the provision of adequate and appropriate support and resources to support learners who are in need of additional support access the curriculum.

• Focus – support and resources for non-speaking children
Purpose of the presentation

- Role of Augmentative and Alternative Communication in the early years
- AAC knowledge and its implementation is still limited in ECD phase. However ECD plays a critical role in early identification of barriers to learning in young children

ACTIVITY
Augmentative and Alternative Communication

- AAC plays an important role in facilitating communication in people—children experiencing speech difficulties.
- AAC is educational practice that compensate lack of verbal expression to facilitate communication and participation of people with significant communication difficulties.
Importance of communication

To express our feelings

To state our opinion

To express our needs and wants

To protect ourselves

To enhance independence
Impact of lack of communication skills in children

- Children with communication difficulties cannot convey their needs and wants, cannot tell stories, or relate events, emotions, etc.
- Can not participate in class/school activities
- Relationship with their teachers and peers is affected
Impact of lack of communication skills in children

- Learning and independence will be affected
- Isolation
- Vulnerable to abuse & neglect
AAC - Why is so important?

- Communication is a basic human attribute
- A person communicates is more important than HOW he communicates
- AAC can reduce frustration and isolation
- AAC can facilitate speech and language development
- AAC facilitates interactions and greater independence
AAC candidates

• Can not use speech adequately to express themselves

• Intellectual impairments with various syndrome such as down Syndrome etc

• Sensory impairment (Deafblindness)

• Congenital neurological impairment (Cerebral palsy)

• Autism and other conditions where speech is also involved
Functions of AAC

To compensate speech in non speaking child

To facilitate understanding during teaching
Classification of AAC systems

- Unaided systems
- Aided systems
Unaided systems

Use of body parts to communicate and to facilitate teaching. Example:
- Facial expression, speech, gestures, eye gaze, head nodding, signs including, key word signing

Example of a pre school song
**Aided systems**

Anything we use for communication except our own body

This includes objects, pictures, line drawings and traditional orthography examples.
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