How Young is Too Young

Brenda Del Monte MA SLP-CCC
Melanie Conatser OTR/L
Kristi Roher
This 9-month old is putting his lips on a photo of a bottle. He understands that symbols have meaning.
So – why aren’t we giving them AAC?
Barriers – Myths
Hinders Speech Development

• “I don’t want to give them a crutch.”
• ”They will get ‘lazy’ and never talk.”
Barriers – Myths about AAC

• “Sign Language is better.”
• “They haven’t mastered PECS.” (prerequisite)
• Cognition is too low.
Where do we start?

• Create Experiences!
• Tap onto their sensory strength
• Building a list of favorites
AAC is a WHOLE BODY EXPERIENCE!!!
Where do I start with my little one?

- ACCESS
  - Touch
  - Switch
  - Eye Gaze
Switch Sites

• **Switch Site Examples:**
  • Hand
  • Head (temple)
  • Foot
  • Elbow
What do I need?

- TOYS TOYS TOYS
- Movement / Tactile / Sensory
- Pictures / Low tech boards
- Single Message Buttons
- Step-by-step

Play gives children a chance to practice what they are learning.
-MR. ROGERS
Creating Experiences through toys

- Switches
- Battery Interrupters
Creating Experiences through Movement / Tactile / Sensory
Build it up / Knock it down / Do it again / CRASH!!

Blocks
Red Solo Cups
Card Board Bricks
Blow it / let it go – pop/ high-low/ big-little

- Bubbles
- Balloons
Teaching through song – a tactile / movement experience

• A bouncing we will go
• Row your boat
• SPIDERS
Now that we have created multiple motivating experiences....

• Choice making
• Cause and effect language
• I say something and you react
• No wrong answer
Teaching not Testing
Low Tech Board

• Eye Gaze
• Gross Motor
• Field of 3-9
Single Message Button

• Tell mom and dad “I love you.”
• Ask for a hug.
• Say a prayer.
• Say: “Trick-or-Treat” “Merry Christmas” “Happy Birthday”
• “Ready or not here I come!”
• “Turn the page.”
• Any carrier phrase in a book (e.g., the Hungry Caterpillar “But he was still hungry.”)
2 Single Message Buttons

• *Requires two switch sites. Two switch sites are ultimately required for powered mobility and scanning on a communication device. Note: Each concept may need to be taught individually before they are asked to use both buttons.

• Yes/No
  • Example: Place “yes” button on forehead and ‘no’ button on temple.

• More/All done

• Up/down

• My turn/your turn

• Little/big
Why do we need two switch sites?
Sophia’s video
Step-By-Step

• **About me:** My name is...., I’m _____ years old,
• My favorite song is......, etc.
• **Sing a song:** Itsy bitsy spider went up the water spout -press button for more--down came the rain..
• **Personal Narrative:** “Hi, daddy! Do you want to hear about my day?”
• **Games:** Simon says, Red-light Green-light
• **Ask and answer questions:** Who, What, Where, When, Why
• **Nursery rhymes/poems:** B-I-N-G-O
• **Counting:** Hide and Seek
Need to try before you buy?????