AG Bell Symposium 2015 Resources
A Case Study in Unlocking the Brain
Becky Clem, MA, CCC-SLP, LSLS Cert. AVT

A Case Study in Unlocking the Brain:
Hearing Technology + AVT + Augmentative Communication

Read these articles of interest:


Use these tips when working with children with hearing loss, complex disabilities and AAC:

- Work to establish auditory responses early. Share what those look like with the audiologists.
- Participate in behavioral testing when possible. By participating, one can better assess clear auditory responses for intervention and parent guidance.
- Learn what the child enjoys doing at home. Use that information and make it real in therapy sessions.
- Listen to the parents describe how the child communicates at home. Have them video clips of communication acts and play.
- Collaborate and learn from your Occupational Therapist and Physical Therapist. Enlist their help for seating and positioning, adaptive equipment, modifying books and toys, to provide the easiest access for the child.
- Investigate use of switch toys in therapy sessions. Children with complex motor disabilities will be able to access toys more easily when adaptations are available. They will attend for longer times, engage in communication, and most importantly have fun.
- Share evidence about AAC with parents. Often parents will feel that using AAC will impede the child’s potential for spoken language. There is evidence in the literature of improved spoken language with use of AAC. Share this information in plain language with parents.
- Record progress and examples by video tape often.
- Refer patients to AAC specialists. Consider episodes of care for the child: AAC intervention for a time then auditory-based intervention. Work with the AAC specialist and parents to use auditory strategies in treatment sessions.
- Be mindful that progress may be very different for each child with complex disabilities.
Seek out these websites:

- **http://cerebralpalsy.org/information/communication/unlocking-communication/**: Topics include *Unlocking the doors to communication, Harnessing technology, A pathway to independence, How do I find what works?*
- **http://cerebralpalsy.org** – has excellent resources for funding, community support, assistive technology, has short article about cochlear implants for children with cerebral palsy,
- **www.prentrom.com** ----language lab section
- **www.aacandautism.com** ---- Words For Life and the method Language Acquisition through Motor Planning
- **www.vocalid.co** - this site offers the opportunity to be a speech bank donor. They develop individualized voices for AAC device users. Instead of having a generic voice on the device, they can select and have a voice ID unique to the user.