

## **Disability Resource Hub Disclaimer**

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# What are you communicating to me?

Receptive communication charts are for when we need to help the person understand something.

These communication charts are helpful when:

- **The person finds it hard to understand information when it is just given in words.**
- **Particular words or ways of saying things, can be a trigger to make the person upset.**

These communication charts help us to make sure the person is always told things in the way that helps them understand best.

Communication charts work best when they are kept somewhere easy for people to find and use, when people check them regularly, make necessary changes and add new things that they have learned.

When capturing how best to communicate with someone think about the following:

- **Do real objects, object symbols or pictures help the person's understanding?**
- **Do you need to give the person time to process what you are telling them? How long?**

Are there phrases or words that you should avoid with the person? If so what other words or actions help communicate the same message? For example, using any negative language like no, stop or don't, doesn't work well for Alex. Instead, Alex's staff needed to find a phrase that communicated what they wanted Alex to do. For example, "Alex, please move away from the water," rather than "Alex, don't get in the water!"

This information was developed by Helen Sanderson Associates (Australia) in 2011, for Ageing Disability and Home Care, Department of Human Services NSW, as a resource to support the Lifestyle Planning Practice Guide and Tools. Most of these tools are Person Centred Thinking tools, and were either developed by The Learning Community for Person Centred Practices, or Helen Sanderson Associates. They are used here with permission. We would like to thank the residents, family members and staff for their time and support in developing examples.

These instructions are not intended as a substitute for training. If you are using these tools for the first time and have not attended a Person Centred Thinking course, please seek support from a colleague or manager who has attended training.



At this time	We need to let ..... know	To do this	Helped or supported by

What are you communicating to me?

# tips

- 1 Start with what the person does, or what you think the person is trying to tell you, and then fill in the other columns.
- 2 Pay attention to recording detail as this could have a big role in whether people provide consistent responses to the person.
- 3 You could also use photos or video to capture this information, especially if what the person does is difficult to describe in words.



## Eliza

Eliza is an extremely intelligent 10 year old girl with a wicked sense of humour and a strong passion for maths and socialising. She has a condition called Epidermalbulosa which means her skin blisters very easily which results in much scar tissue. In her case, all blisters need to be popped as soon as possible, as they will only grow larger and create increased pain and scar tissue. This effects all aspects of Eliza's life and has resulted in greatly reduced mobility. Eliza uses words to communicate however it helps to know more information around her communication so we don't rely on her words alone.  
(photo provided)

At this time	We need to let Eliza know	To do this	Helped or supported by
<p>Eliza is having a great time doing something she likes in the early afternoon like playing a board game or creating dance routines.</p>	<p>It is time to start her physio exercises.</p>	<p>Give her warning that after we finish the game/ dance, we will need to do exercises. Give her a choice about whether she starts them at 3:30 or 4.00pm.</p>	<p>Make the exercises fun! Do funny exercises of your own at the same time, put some music on that she likes, make it into a game of some sort. If Eliza is forced to do the exercises when she doesn't want to, she will cry, get very worked up and not get any exercises done.</p>

# tips

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