

# Assistive Technology Strategies for Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders



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# After Today's Session

## ✓ Email --

- PDF of the presentation slides
- Certificate of attendance
- Additional handouts
- Product video demo links!
- Special offer



## ✓ Link to recording of this webinar session

[www.ablenetinc.com/au](http://www.ablenetinc.com/au)



# Good to Know!

- This session was designed to provide beginner to intermediate information on the topic.
- This session features AbleNet's assistive technology to support strategies.
- The limited time & number of attendees will necessitate that questions be addressed in a follow-up email.

# Poll #1

What is your relationship to individuals with ASD?

- Special educator
- General education teacher
- Speech language pathologist
- Related services provider
- Administrator / supervisor
- Family / caregiver
- Other

# Challenges of Autism

- Situations involving people
- Inability to ignore, modulate, or organize sensory information
- Demands
- Interruptions & changes
- Lack of information



**All of it involves communication!**

# A Great Match! Autism & AAC

ASD	AAC
Visual learners	AAC uses visual cues
Interest in inanimate objects	AAC tools & devices are inanimate
Difficulty with complex cues	Level of complexity can be controlled so AAC grows with individual
Difficulty with change	AAC is static & predictable
Difficulty with complexities of social interaction	AAC provides buffer & bridge between communication partners

*Meaningful Exchanges for People with Autism: An Introduction to Augmentative & Alternative Communication* by Joanne M. Cafiero, Ph.D.





# A Great Match! Autism & AAC

ASD	AAC
Difficulty with motor planning	AAC is motorically easier than speech
Anxiety	AAC interventions don't apply pressure or stress
Behavioral challenges	AAC provides an instant means to communicate, preempting difficult behaviors
Difficulty with memory	AAC provides means for language comprehension that relies on recognition rather than memory

*Meaningful Exchanges for People with Autism: An Introduction to Augmentative & Alternative Communication* by Joanne M. Cafiero, Ph.D.



# Benefits of AAC

- ❖ Facilitates connection to others & improves social skills
- ❖ Use of visual supports helps increase understanding of environment & routines & expectations within it
- ❖ Increases level of environment control & self-control

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# Benefits of AAC

- ❖ Reveal hidden cognitive abilities & potential
- ❖ Provides more access & more successful inclusion
- ❖ Enhances positive self-esteem, increasing quality of life of individual & others

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# Assistive Technology to Aid Communication

## Must be . . .

- Portable, durable, easy to manage, & always available
- Easy to use & capable of delivering a clear message quickly
- Easy to adapt &/or expand



# AbleNet's Assistive Technology



# TalkingBrix



- Connectable for customized layout
- Power on/off switch
- Built-in rechargeable battery
- 10 seconds of recording time
- Snap switch cap included

# Organize & Structure Events in Time

## Assistive technology support for schedules:

- Increases ability to focus
- Increases independent functioning
- Eases transitions, reduces anxiety

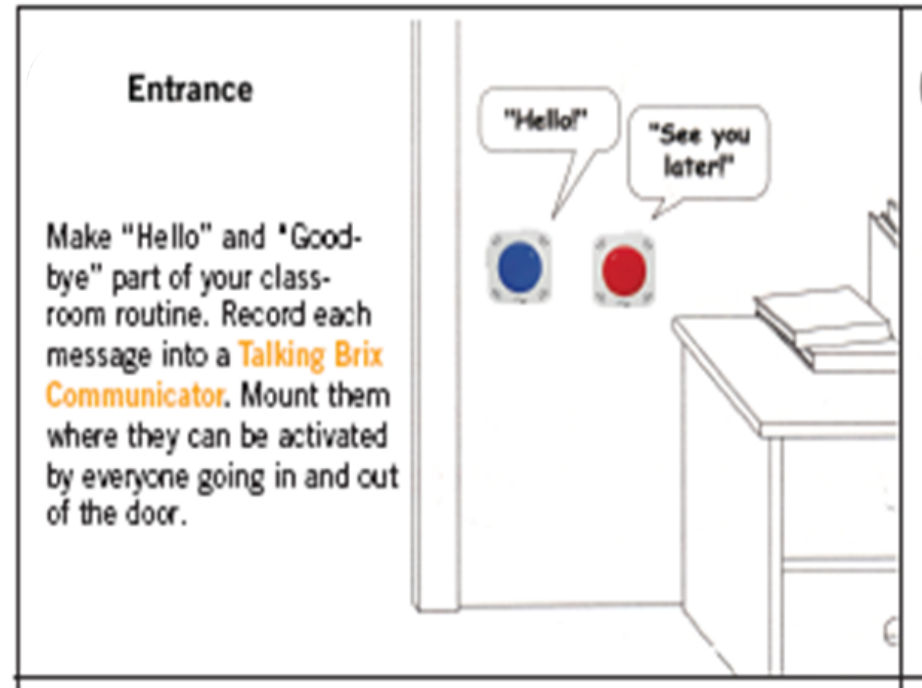
## White Board



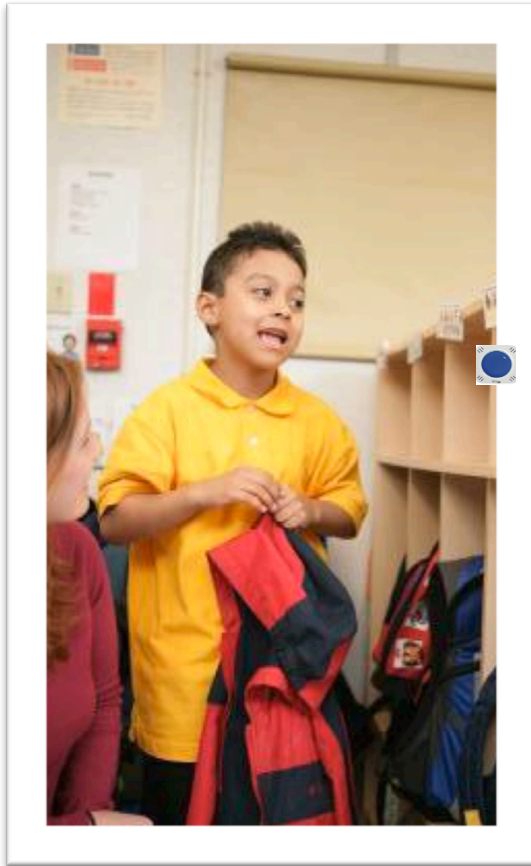
Get set for the day! Record the daily schedule into the **Talking Brix Communicator** to visually share the class schedule and prepare students for the day.



# Organize & Structure Events as Routines



# Organize & Structure Space




# Making Choices





# TalkTrac

Wearable  
communicator for  
home, school, & in  
the community!

- 4 messages + 2 levels  total of 8 messages
- 80 seconds of recording time
- Rechargeable NiMH battery
- Option: use with standard wristbands





# Expressing Wants & Needs



I need a break now.



I'm feeling frustrated. Can you help me understand why I can't do that?



I'd rather play by myself.

# Giving & Following Directions



# Self-Talk/Self-Management

## Assistive technology support for behavior regulation:

- Increases self-regulation
- Allows repeated listening of message as needed
- Reduces overall anxiety



**Self-instruction:** “First I will \_\_\_\_\_, then I \_\_\_\_\_.”

**Coping:** “If I forget a step, I can go back.”

**Assertive/acknowledging:** “Okay. I’ll do it that way next time.”

# Providing Information

## Assistive technology support for providing vital information:

- ✓ Where should I be?
- ✓ What work or activity will I do?
- ✓ How much work will I do? For how long?
- ✓ How will I know when I'm finished?
- ✓ What will I do next?





# Poll #2

Why do you use communication devices with individuals with ASD?

- Clarify vocalizations & nonverbal communication
- Expand language
- Replace speech for individuals who are nonverbal
- Provide structure & tools to develop language
- Increase receptive language

# iTalk2

- 2 messages with 2 minutes recording time
- Available with 3 levels, 4 minutes of recording time
- Built-in symbol storage
- Switch inputs & toy/appliance outputs



# Choice Making

- Make choices in a PECS-like format
- Can be used to provide acceptable alternative actions





# Social Interactions

- **Telling a 2-part joke**
  - “Why did the chicken cross the playground?”
  - “To get to the other slide!”
- **Asking a question / stating desire**
  - “Would you like to play outside?”
  - “I want to play catch.”



# Conveying Information in Regard to Tasks

- “I understand. Can I start working now?”
- “I don’t understand. Can you show me?”
- “I need help.”
- “I’m all done.”
- “Yes.”
- “No.”



# SuperTalker Progressive Communicator



# SuperTalker

- 16 minutes of recording time
- Sequential message access across all locations
- 8 levels / 8 overlays
- 1, 2, 4 & 8 grid formats
- 8 switch jacks
- 2 toy/appliance jacks



# Learning Routines

*School, work, & personal care*

- Reduce stress of a new experience
- Ensure that routine takes on intended meaning
- Avoid dependency on others for cues
- Increase learning & generalization rate





# Initiating & Maintaining Conversation

- “Do you want to know what I did today?”
- “Can you guess?”
- “Try again.”
- “Should I tell you?”
- “Today I \_\_\_\_\_.”
- “What did you do today?”



# Conversation Maintenance

## Comments:

- Share thoughts & viewpoints
- Agree or disagree
- Offer additional information

## Questions:

- Demonstrate interest
- Gain new information
- Verify assumptions & perceptions





# Gaining Information through Social Stories™

**Social Stories™ can be used to:**

- Review & share information about past events
- Introduce changes & new routines
- Teach social rules & academic skills
- Prevent & solve problems

# Poll #3

What are the roadblocks to using AT for those with ASD?

- Finding the right device(s)
- Incorporating AT across settings
- Motivation of individual to use AT
- People to support use of AT
- Purchase of AT
- Maintenance of AT

# VideoBrix



- Single message communicator
- Up to 90 seconds recording time
- Built in full-color LCD screen, camera, & microphone
- Built in magnet to attach anywhere
- Rechargeable with included USB cable

# Following Directions



## Assistive technology support for following directions:

- Increases comprehension of expectations
- Helps maintain & refocus attention
- Reduces support required, increasing level of independence



# Regulating Behavior

## **Assistive technology support for behavior regulation:**

- Increases an individual's ability to regulate her/his own behavior
- Allows individual to listen to message as often as needed
- Reduces overall anxiety



# iDevices for Communication





# SoundingBoard App for iPad Communication

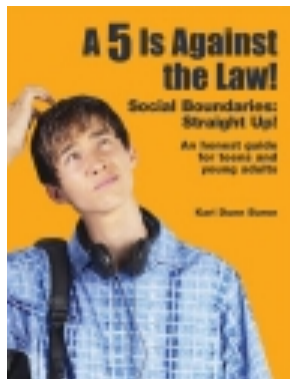
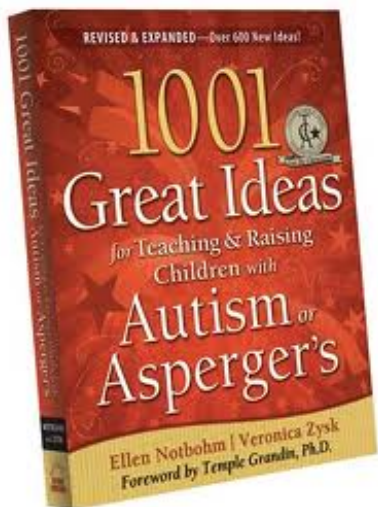


- Up to 9 message locations
- Built-in AbleNet symbol library
- Use your own photo library
- Linking boards features
- Scanning switch accessible - Blue2

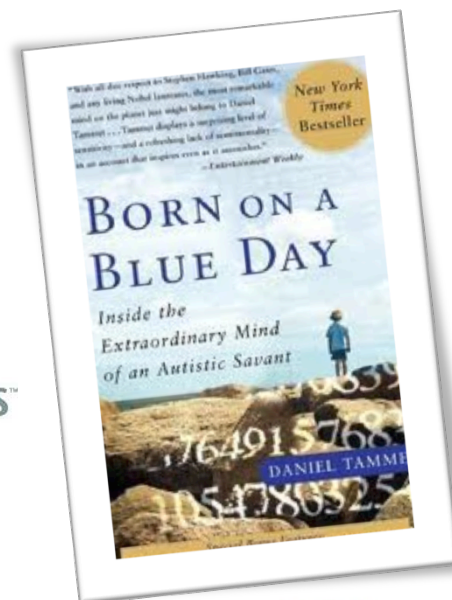
SoundingBoard™ is FREE for a limited time! Available at iTunes store.

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# Resources



[www.wati.org](http://www.wati.org)



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# Professional Development



## Choose the AbleNet Training Solutions to Meet Your Staff Needs

Choose 1 or more solutions to ensure effective instruction for your students and educators:

Onsite



An onsite trainer targets your specific staff/student population needs directly and provides hands-on instruction for any AbleNet technology, software, and/or curriculum you choose. Onsite training provides a high degree of interaction and hands on product experience.



Webinar



Live or recorded custom Webinars provide staff with all the essential information on the curricular program, software, or technology purchased and an opportunity for staff to ask question or dialogue about specific needs.



Contact your AbleNet sales representative for your specific curriculum, software, and technology custom training package.

*Free training or significant discounts to training solutions may be available for large quantity purchases of technology and/or curriculum.*

Options to meet your staff needs!





# Discount on assistive technology featured in today's webinar:

Talking Brix

Video Brix

TalkTrac

iTalk2

SuperTalker Progressive Communicator

PROMOTION CODE



WEB050112

Expiration: June 1, 2012





# AbleNetUniversity™

Continuing Education & Learning Opportunities  
for Professionals and Caregivers of Persons  
with Special Needs

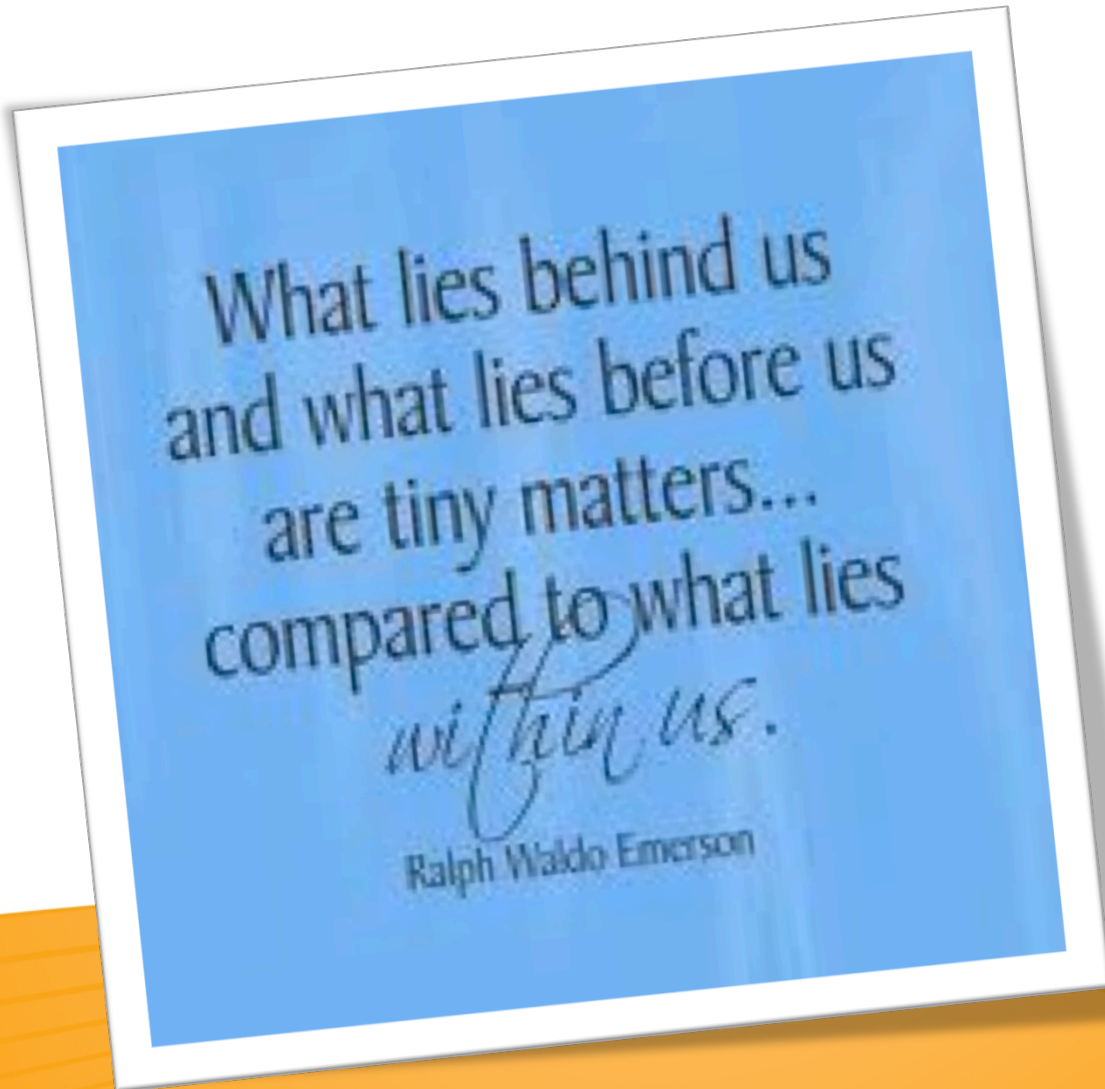
- Schedule of live webinars for assistive technology & curricular solutions
- Vast library of archived recorded webinars

**[www.ablenetinc.com/au](http://www.ablenetinc.com/au)**

**ablenet**®



# Everyone deserves a voice!







capable.attainable.remarkable

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FREE SoundingBoard app 5/1/12 !!!

