

This week's PODD communication focus...



Using Chat Words throughout Your Day

Core vocabulary makes up more than 80% of the words we use in every day conversation, in any language, no matter what age we are. It is only a small set of words and is used across contexts. (Balandin & Iacono, 1999; Banajee et al, 2003; Stuart & Beukelman, 1997).

- ◆ One of the places core vocabulary can be found in PODD is in the 'Chat Words' section. This is usually found on pages 1a and 1b of a PODD book or under the Chat Words button on a device. Words such as I do, you, more, finish, help, stop can all be used across the day in many different contexts, to express a variety of communication purposes. You can:
 - Request recurrence – 'I want **more**'
 - Request cessation – '**finish!**' 'Let's **stop** now'
 - Ask a question – 'Can **I** do it?'
 - Assert independence – '**I** can do it!'
 - Comment – '**You**'re having **more**'
 - Request assistance '**I** need some **help**'and much more!
- The Chat Words section of PODD also serves another very important function. It allows for quick communication exchanges for the purposes of maintaining and taking your turn in the conversation, and being an active participant. Many social exchanges can be made using Chat Words, and you will usually find phrases such as 'I love you', 'Go away', 'Uh oh', and 'I don't know' here.

Social communication is more than 50% of our conversation, with 'social closeness' being ranked as the primary reason for communication between adults (Light, 1998, in Farrall & Clendon, 2011).

- This week, take time to get familiar with Chat Words. Set yourself a goal to use these words for as many different reasons as you can across the day.
 - While getting ready in the morning – 'Hurry up!', 'Let me help.', 'You do it'*
 - While eating – 'I think you want more', 'you've finished', 'Do you want help?', 'Uh oh! It's finished!'*
 - Whenever, wherever – 'I love you!'*
 - When you aren't sure what to do, or what someone means – 'I don't know'*
 - When you are helping your child – 'I'll help'*
 - When you are playing together – 'me/My turn/I do it', 'you/your turn/you do it'*
 - When you're sharing a book together, comment on what is happening in the pictures – 'Uh oh! Look!', 'Uh oh, I think he needs help.'*
- Many people ask why 'I don't know' is easily accessible on the 'Chat Words' page. Actively teaching your child to indicate 'I don't know' helps others to see them as active communicator, especially when less familiar communication partners might expect them just to answer 'yes' or 'no'. The alternative would be not to answer or not to say anything at all, which could lower the expectations of less familiar communication partners. So remember, model the use of 'I don't know' frequently whenever you can!

Balandin, S., Iacono, T. (1999). *Adult Vocabulary Usage, English, Sydney, Australia, AAC, Vol. 14.*

Banajee, M., Dicarolo, C., & Stricklin, S. B. (2003). *Core Vocabulary Determination for toddlers. Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC), 19, 67-73.*

Farrall, J. & Clendon, S. (2011). *Wanna Hear Some Gossip? Building Social Communication for ALL Students. Workshop: Special Education Principal's Association of New Zealand (SEPANZ) conference.*

Stuart, S. & Beukelman, D. (1997). *Most Frequently Occurring Words of Older Adults. AAC, Vol. 13.*