Session Descriptions: Indiana AAC Summit 2016

"Moving Beyond Exchanges in AAC Intervention" by Erna Alant (SLT & Special Educator)
Over the past decade, AAC therapists, teachers and parents have become increasingly aware of the limitations that scripted messages impose on interactions of device users. Pre-recorded messages and limited access to vocabulary not only restrict AAC users in what they can say but also inhibit authentic interactions with communication partners. The AAC system therefore becomes a hindrance, rather than a facilitator in interactions between the user of AAC and communication partners. This presentation will explore the challenges of using AAC technology in interactions between users of AAC and their communication partners. Case studies will be used to highlight how AAC strategies can a) restrict as well as b) enhance the development of meaning between communication partners. Finally strategies for facilitating the development of meaning-based interactions will be discussed by referring to intention, inter-subjective awareness and communication exchanges.

"From Tantrums to Toileting, and Now Talking: A Case Study in Bilingual AAC Intervention" by Laura Kingsley (Special Educator) & Keshia Bell (Special Educator)
At the AAC Summit last year, we introduced you to Anthony, a 10-year old with severe cognitive impairment and no functional speech. Through the use of systematic, bilingual instruction, Anthony had begun to replace his large repertoire of challenging behaviors with single word requests via PECS. Now, one year later, Anthony has not only increased his use of alternative communication, but begun to use some speech, both Spanish and English! This presentation will provide an overview of the strategies that have resulted in Anthony's tremendous transformation.

"So Many Systems, So Little Time: Just Tell Me What I Need!" by Beth Waite-Lafever (SLP)
There are more choices for speech generating devices than ever before. It is overwhelming to determine which system to recommend. Often you hear someone say "our school uses Touch Chat" or "we only use Words for Life", or "everyone in our class has Proloquo2go". When this is the case, we have to wonder if we are giving everyone the same system because it is truly the best for the consumer or easier on those supporting them. This session will compare/contrast some of the well-known dedicated speech generating devices and apps. Features will be highlighted, along with profiles of individuals who may best benefit from them.

"A Year of Words in Action" by Kim Hurley (SLP)
In 2013, PrAACtical AAC introduced "A Year of Words" – basically, a monthly breakdown of core words. An additional set of words was added in 2014. Since then several therapists have submitted useful ideas for working with these word set. A Year of Words provides a limited set of core words to focus on each month, allowing therapists to target both word knowledge and fluency. I currently use these word sets, as well as ideas and strategies gleaned from several other sources, when working with AAC users. I will share ideas for teaching and carryover activities based on these word sets.

"Use of Low Tech CoreScanner" by Jenny Cardinal (SLP)
This presentation is a case study of a 4 y/o girl with significant and complex communication needs. Medical history is significant for TBI resulting in cerebral palsy with spastic quadriplegia, feeding dysfunction, cortical vision impairment, and global developmental delays. Her vision and motor impairments rule out switch access as well as eye gaze as a means for alternative access to any communication system. Partner Assisted Scanning (PAS) proved beneficial for engaging in choice making from a field of two to three. In order to provide a comprehensive vocabulary within a rule based system, the Core Scanner program from the Prentke Romich Company was adapted into a low tech system accessed through PAS.

"Implementing Core Vocabulary into an ABA Classroom" by Erin Peabody (SLP), & Mark Howard (Special Educator)

Research supports the use of Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) teaching techniques to help individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders make communication, behavioral and academic gains. This lecture will discuss how one can use the principles of ABA to teach the understanding and use of core vocabulary to individuals who often use physical behavior to communicate with others.

"Plan AAC-COREdingly: How to Plan for Whole-Group Core Language Instruction" by Brenda Brannigan (Special Educator) & Kate Morris (SLP)
For classroom teams getting started in utilizing and embedding core vocabulary-based AAC activities, strategies and materials can be daunting. This session presents one classroom team's collaborative efforts in implementing weekly whole group AAC core vocabulary language activities. It offers a weekly plan for each week of the school year, including examples and curricula materials. The plan was generated via collaboration among a school district and the local university.

"I Wasn't Ready Then, But Listen to Me Now!" by Laura Kingsley (Special Educator) & Sara Coggins (Special Educator)
This presentation will demonstrate, through a case study, that persistence in AAC intervention can pay off. The presenters have documented the AAC experiences of a 12-year old male with severe cognitive impairment who appeared would never move beyond non-symbolic communication. That is, until the right AAC system was matched to his needs and best practices for classroom-based AAC intervention were applied. The opportunity to use classroom peers for modeling of AAC communication provided incredible support. David's emergence as a symbolic communicator will be shared along with examples of intervention strategies that supported his communication growth.

"Mission Possible: Providing AAC within a School System" by April Newton (SLP)
Many districts in the state of Indiana are reluctant to evaluate and implement AAC to the fullest extent. Administers may be cautious, secondary to possible legal or financial obligations, others lack the knowledge or support, and some may not feel a responsibility to implement AAC. However AAC needs will not go away. This presentation will address the legal responsibility of districts, resources to assist in developing protocol for procedures, assessment, and implementation for low and high tech systems. Sample forms will also be provided.

"It's a Great Day for Core: Embedding Communication into AACtivities" by Brenda Brannigan (Special Educator), Annette Champion (SLP), & Erin Peabody (SLP)
Those teaching individuals how to communicate with AAC are often challenged by how to incorporate its use throughout the entirety of the academic day. A collaboration between a university and local school corporation worked together to problem solve and create summer extension programming for students with moderate to severe communication delays. The focus of this programming was to increase the student's use of any and all communication modality across all activities. This was achieved by using children's literature as thematic foundation for a traditional summer camp experience.

"ABC: Access for Building Communication" by Kim Hurley (SLP)
Students with very significant motor and sensory needs can be difficult to assess and treat. One of the first, and most important, steps is to find an appropriate response modality in order to access any communication strategy. This presentation will discuss various non-standard response modes that have been used successfully for student access to technology as well as to communication. Attendees will also have an opportunity to brainstorm case studies, or may bring in their own 'problems'.

"Supported Decision Making with Adults with Significant Disabilities" by Lindsey Ogle (PhD Student) & Erna Alant (SLT & Special Educator)
Understanding how to meaningfully include individuals with severe communication problems in the decision making process remains a challenge for professionals. Not involving them in the decision

making process can leave these individuals dependent on their caregivers and has been demonstrated to lower overall quality of life (Nota, Ferrari, Soresi, & Wehmeyer, 2007). This study aims to understand how direct support professionals meaningfully include the adults with severe communication problems they work with in the decision making process to identify best practices. Previous research as well as case study examples will be presented.

"Turn on the Classroom Light with LAMP" by Leta Donica (SLP) & Anne Maslanka (Special Educator)

When Anne Maslanka, Lifeskills Special Education Teacher for Noblesville Schools, was asked, "What is the number one thing missing in her classroom, she responded, "Communication." Anne's class had a mix of verbal, minimally verbal and non-verbal students. She was having a difficult time giving the students what they needed in order to communicate across the school setting. She consulted with her school Speech/Language Pathologist who contacted the Assistive Technology Coordinator with Hamilton, Boone Madison Special Education Cooperative to discuss what could be done in Anne's classroom. A committee consisting of the school SLP, classroom teacher and AT Coordinator was developed and worked on a master plan that would involve every student in the classroom at different levels.

"I Know the Answer! Case Studies on Inclusion" by Sara Coggins (Special Educator) & Keshia Bell (Special Educator)

Integration of AAC users with multiple disabilities into general education settings can be fraught with challenges. This presentation will provide suggestions for success based on two case studies. The strategies utilized to allow for positive outcomes from inclusion are situated in best practices. Keith and Keri are relatively novice AAC users, but their service providers have insured positive outcomes, resulting in tremendous academic and social benefits.

"Getting Started Reading with AAC" by Beth Waite-Lafever (SLP)

How do you teach minimally verbal students to read and write? When a child can't produce phoneme sounds, can they learn to read? Educators and families struggle with knowing what a student who can't effectively communicate understands and how to begin teaching reading. This session will help you develop a plan to get started. We'll cover components of Balanced Literacy framework and how to use them with individuals using AAC. No matter what type of system you're using, from low tech to high tech, from iPad to dedicated device, all students can increase literacy skills. See how to incorporate self-selected reading, shared reading and guided reading with AAC systems and ideas for teaching sound-symbol correspondence. Learn about low-cost and free resources for age-respectful books and ways to write your own with your student. Participant will leave with specific, concrete ways to teach reading skills to students with severe communication deficits.

"How Words for Life Changed My Life!" by Jennifer Lagomarcino (SLP)

Trying to meet the needs of all students when pushing speech and language services into a Life Skills classroom can be a daunting task for any Speech/Language Pathologist. Every student presents unique individual needs. This year we experimented with a Words for Life program and results have been amazing.

"The Journey to Developing Renie's Voice" by Amy Piper (SLP), Jessica Meyer (SLP), & Nicole Long (Parent)

Lorene is a 5 year old girl that is a device user in a general education Kindergarten classroom. The journey to her use of the device as her primary means of communication has been a long road. It has involved multiple professionals at different facilities as well as the energy and support of her parents. This presentation will describe the decision making process that led to AAC, the steps that were taken to create a competent device user and to acquire the device, as well as discussion on how the professionals and Renie's family work together to support her in being a device use.

"Message Banking Options for People with ALS" by Michelle Gutmann (SLP)

One of the most devastating aspects of having ALS is the likelihood of losing one's ability to speak. Given the primordial importance of speech to verbal communication, together with the fact that speech is the default mode of face-to-face communication, people with ALS often turn to their SLP for help in preserving speech for as long as it is viable. One tool for preserving speech is to educate clients about voice and message banking. This presentation will outline various models of voice and message banking and demonstrate various technology options to support this clinical endeavor.