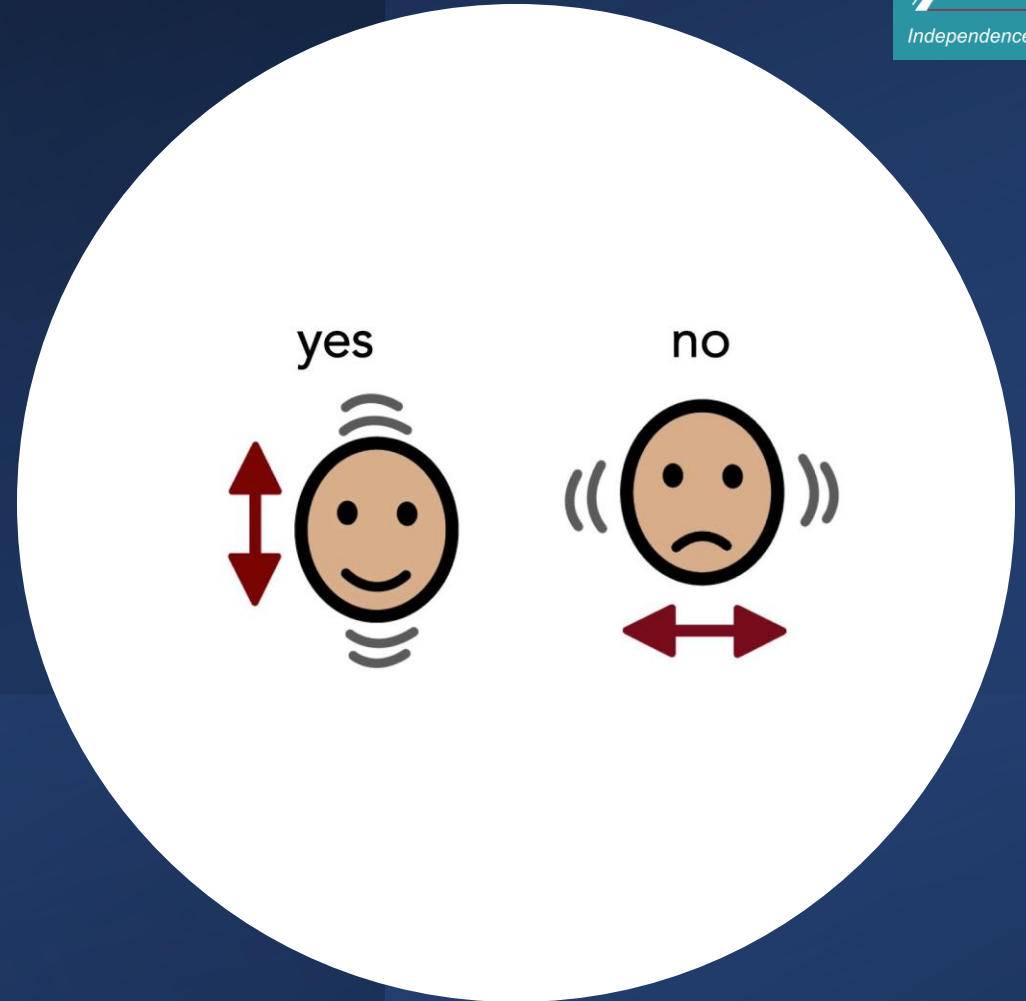


The Importance of Teaching an Unaided Yes/No Response

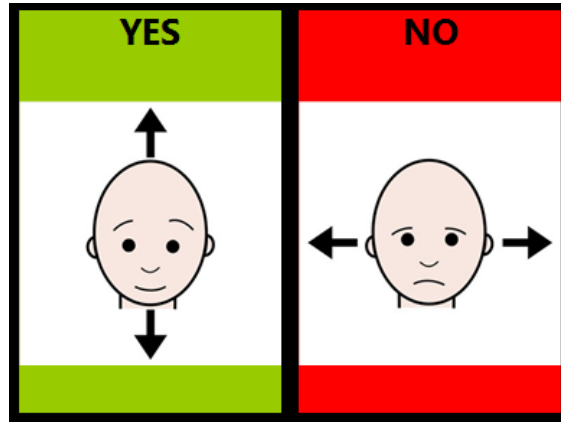


Written by Betty Campbell, Julie Bennett,
Rianna Patch and Rebecca Lander

What you will get out of this session

- Understand why we want to teach an unaided yes/no response
- Learn about different ways someone might be able to indicate yes/no
- Be able to teach an unaided yes/no response
- Be able to teach partner assisted scanning

Why we teach an unaided yes/no



- Allows students to give consent or refuse
- Important to teach from early years of schooling to give the student the best possible opportunities for communication
- Indicate a positive or negative opinion
- Demonstrate understanding
- Express critical information
- Make choices
- Extremely important when using Partner Assisted Scanning to help someone communicate

Why we teach an unaided yes/no

- Allows the student to respond even in the absence of a communication system
- They are able to show their understanding
 - Able to be assessed



Teaching yes/no at the same time

- No need to wait for mastery of one before the other is introduced
- Attribute meaning from day one
- If you just teach “yes” then students think the answer to all “yes” or they can also respond with “yes or no”
 - (e.g. Do you want music yes or no? -> “yes or no”)



What movement/gesture do we teach?

- A universally recognisable movement
- Where not possible, choose two distinct movements that the student can control

We want the student to be able to go out into the public and their movement or gesture to be understood by most others.





Why can't we just use a picture or switch?

- Are these tools we can use everywhere in all positions?
- Pictures and switches can be a helpful intermediate step but if possible we should try to find a movement to replace the use of switches for yes/no





Positioning is key!

When teaching or developing a yes / no response, positioning is key. We need to look at each student's body position and what may impact it;

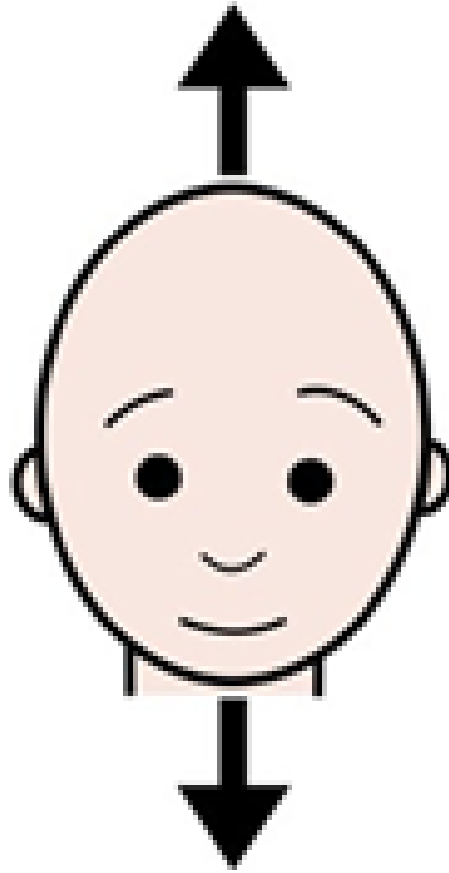
- Stability
- Understanding where our body is in space
- Returning to neutral
 - Head
 - Eyes
 - Posture



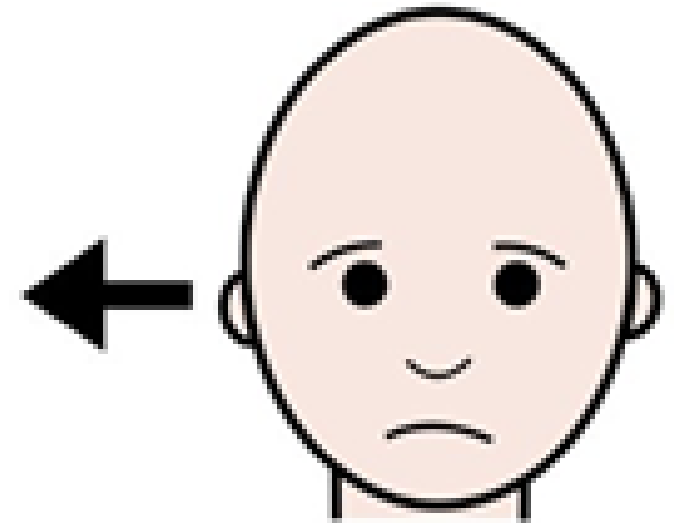
An unaided "yes" and "no" enables communication for a variety of purposes.

Here are different ways to indicate "yes" and "no"

YES



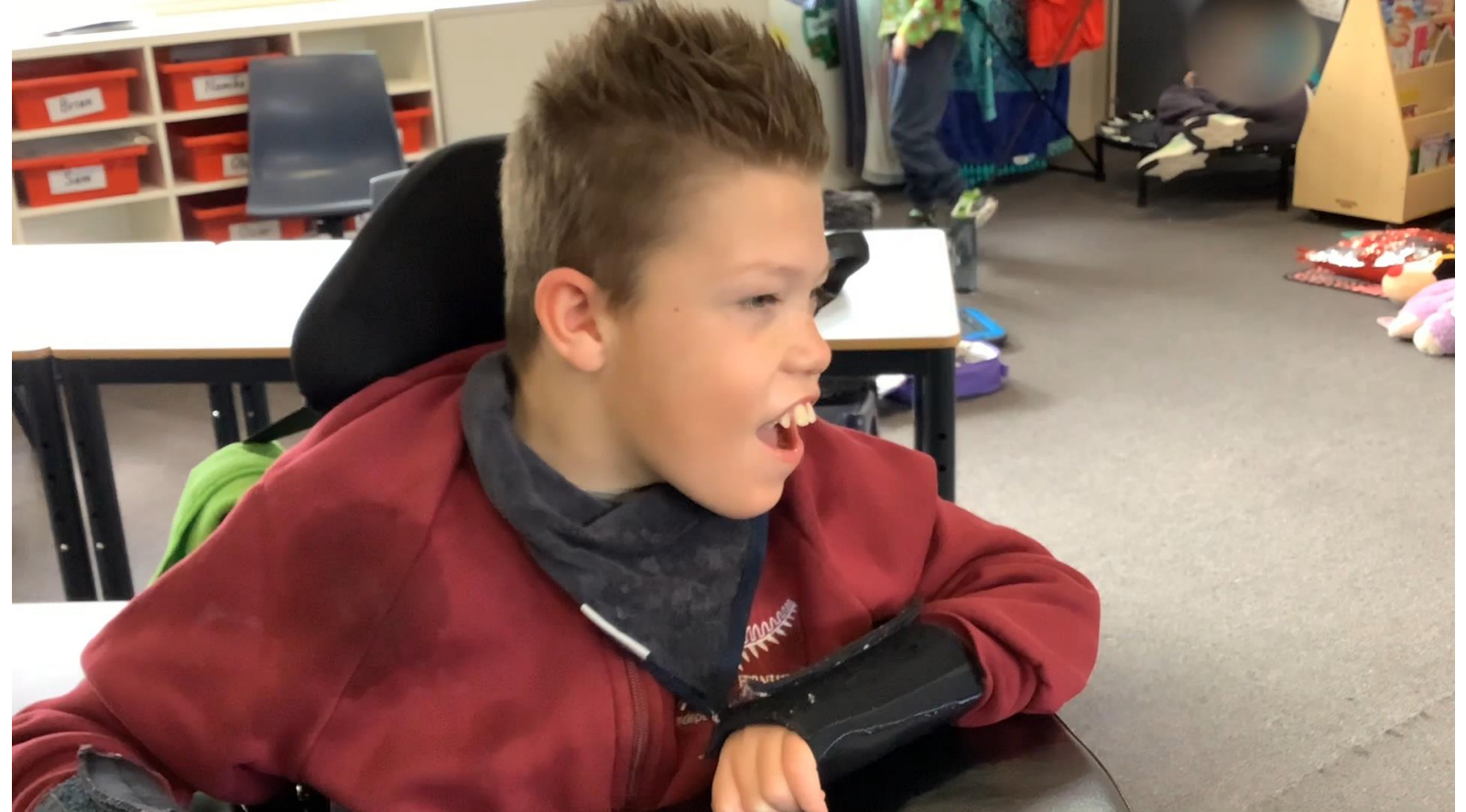
NO



Nodding to
request
more of an
activity



Nodding for yes and
turning head for no
to accept and
refuse something



Nodding and
shaking head
to answer a
question



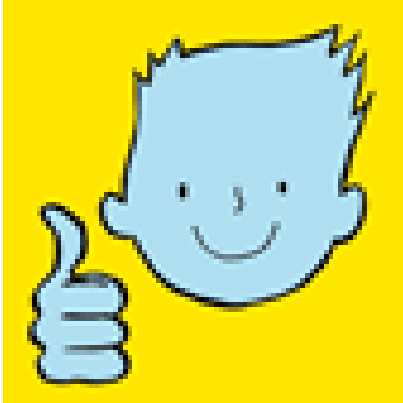


“NO” ← Head -> “YES”

Using partner assisted scanning to give an opinion with a Talking Mat regarding his trial communication device

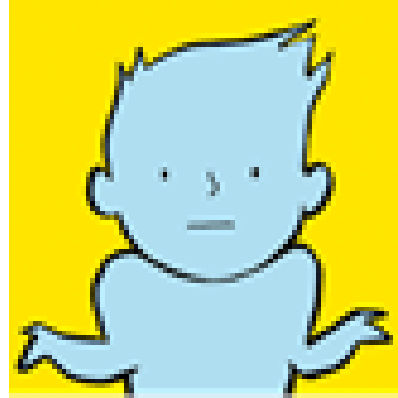


About the trial device



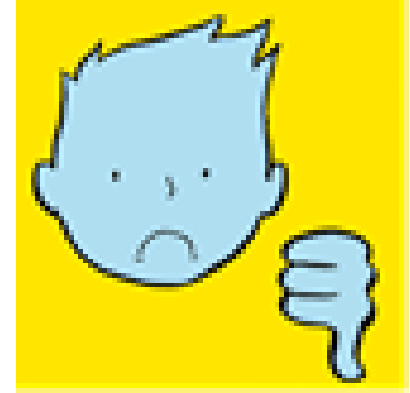
I can...

- Say what I want
- Use it at school
- Talk to teachers
- Give my opinion
- Talk to friends
- Use it by myself



I don't know about

- Talking to my family

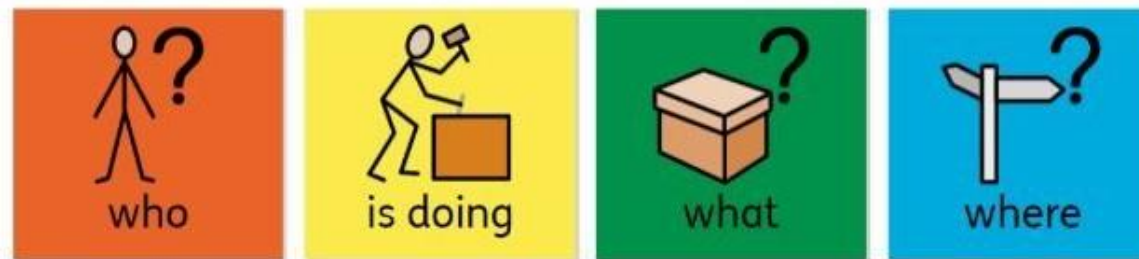


I can't....

- Use it at home

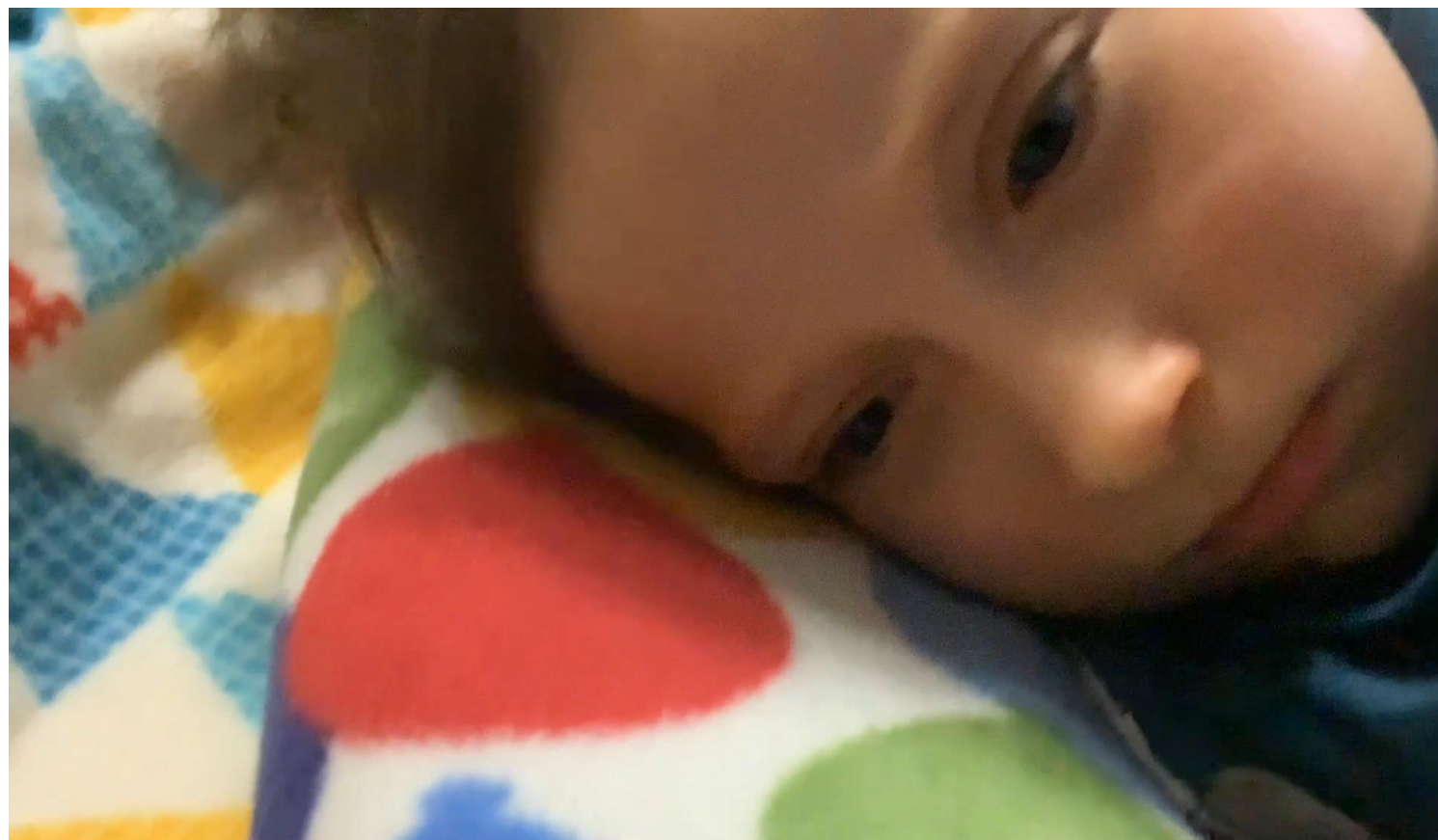
On his paper PODD,
these were things he
said he can't do





Eyes up for "yes" and to the side for "no"

Student using partner assisted scanning to construct a sentence



Eyes up for “yes” and
to the side for “no”

Expressing
something is wrong



Two blinks “yes”
and one blink “no”

Asking for
someone to hold
her hand



It's ok to ask for clarification



Students need to know when their movements are not clear and learn to repair the communication breakdown by making their movements clearer. This helps them to communicate more effectively with a range of communication partners.

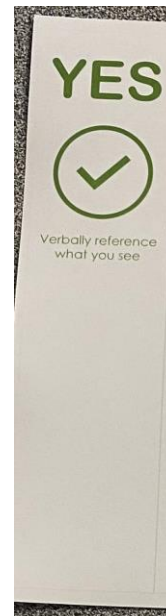
How to teach yes and no

- Elicit movement with songs or toys for younger kids or just practice and talk about it with older kids
- Verbal reference
 - Tell them what movement they are making (e.g. You are lifting your head)
- Attribute meaning
 - Tell them what that movement is telling you (e.g. You're telling me "yes")
- Practice the movement










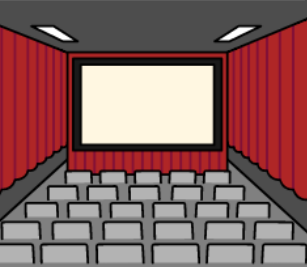




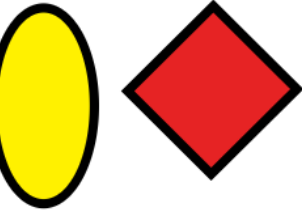


Practice in pairs

- Use the yes/no bookmarks to prompt for the head movement
- Remember to verbally reference the movement and attribute meaning

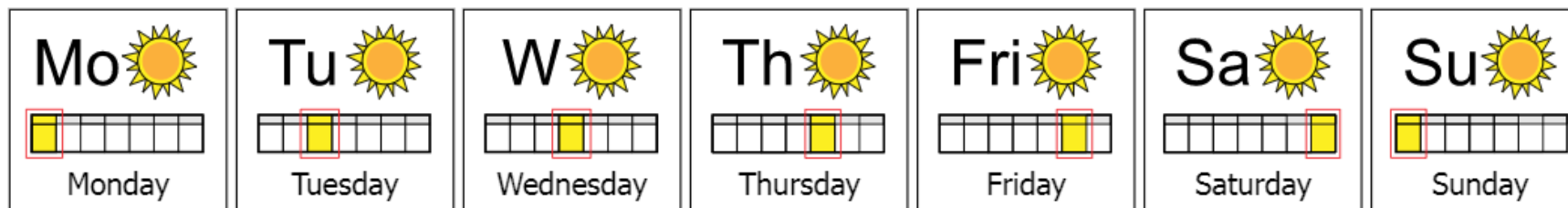
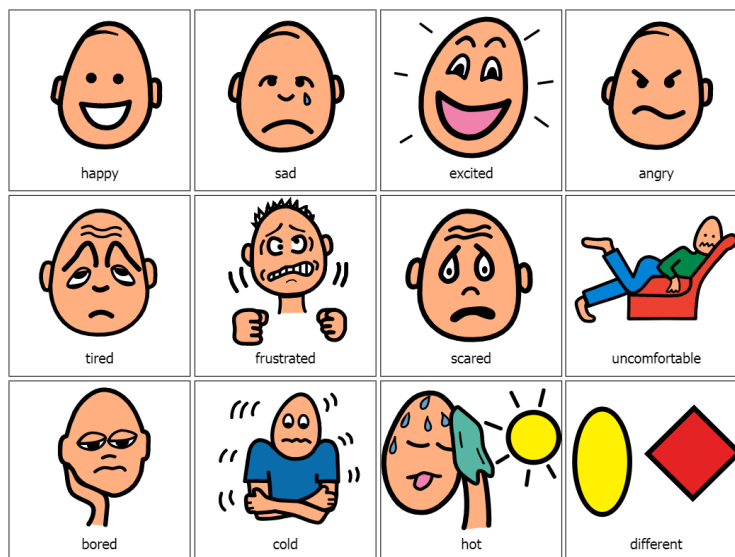


Partner Assisted Scanning (Scan by column then scan within column)

 <p>conference dinner</p>	 <p>bus</p>	 <p>walk</p>	 <p>I don't know</p>	 <p>oops (mistake)</p> <p>Another word</p>  <p>That's all I have to say about that</p> 
 <p>home</p>	 <p>train</p>	 <p>movie theater</p>	 <p>work</p>	
 <p>shopping</p>	 <p>car</p>	 <p>drinks</p>	 <p>different</p>	

Consider how you offer vocabulary to students!

- Students with physical disabilities get unequal access to language
- Mobile students can choose from all the symbols on a board/page. Offer the same opportunity to students with physical disabilities through partner assisted scanning





Putting it all together in school

- Important to teach it across the day
- How students can use yes/no
 - One on one (e.g offering choice at mealtime)
 - Peer to peer interactions
 - Whole class activities (e.g. shared reading)



Take home



“An individual does not abandon simpler strategies in the march towards independence. Instead the individual acquires more and more sophisticated communication methods to add to an existing repertoire”
Blackstone & Hunt Berg, 2003 p15

We live in a world full of technology which has opened up so much for our students. There are constantly new devices and new systems but it is important for us to remember that the device is not the end goal. Communication is our end goal. Helping our students learn to use an unaided yes/no will add to their toolkit, give them access to more language and open up so many more opportunities for interaction when their communication systems are not available.

Sharing and questions

- Would anyone be willing to share how they are teaching these skills in their school/classroom?
- Resources you may use
- Experiences that may not have worked for your classroom