

# Courses in 2026



# In- house courses delivered by Therapists 2026

- Person Centred Communication
- Intensive interaction
- Multisensory stories
- Communication Passports introduction
- Making choices- expressing preferences
- Talking Mats

- Signalong Foundation training (15 hours) and Signalong Workshops (6 hours)
- Communication facilitator role
- Accessible information
- Person centred planning –details on request
- Supporting people to talk about feelings- delivered by psychotherapy associates, details on request



Course Title	Max number of participants	Time required	Delivered by
Person Centred Communication	25 -in person only	3 days	Speech & Language Therapists
Signalong workshop	20	6 hours max	S&LT
Making Choices – expressing preferences	25	1 day	S&LT
Multisensory storytelling	25- in person only		S&LT and Play Therapist
Intensive Interaction	25- in person only		S&LT

Course Title	Max number of participants	Time required	Delivered by
Objects of Reference	25	Half day	Speech & Language Therapists
Accessible information	25	1 day	S&LT
Understanding – the hidden impairment	25	Half day	S&LT
Supporting people to talk about feelings	25	Half day	Psychologist and S&LT
Communication passports and communication support plans	25	1 day –can be delivered over 2 half days	S&LT
Communication and parents with LD	25 face to face	1 day	S&LT

# Strength Needs analysis

Would your service benefit from an objective baseline of staff knowledge skills and practice in communication?

The strength needs analysis process could be a useful starting point for measuring staff skills, knowledge and awareness. The evidence would be gathered via an audit process, questionnaires, observations and interviews as well as via informal assessment. We would also involve self-advocates where appropriate. Data is summarised and benchmarked against appropriate standards for your service. We then create a confidential report and action plan.

The report can serve as a tool to measure progress.

This approach works well in learning disability services, SEND settings and nursing homes.

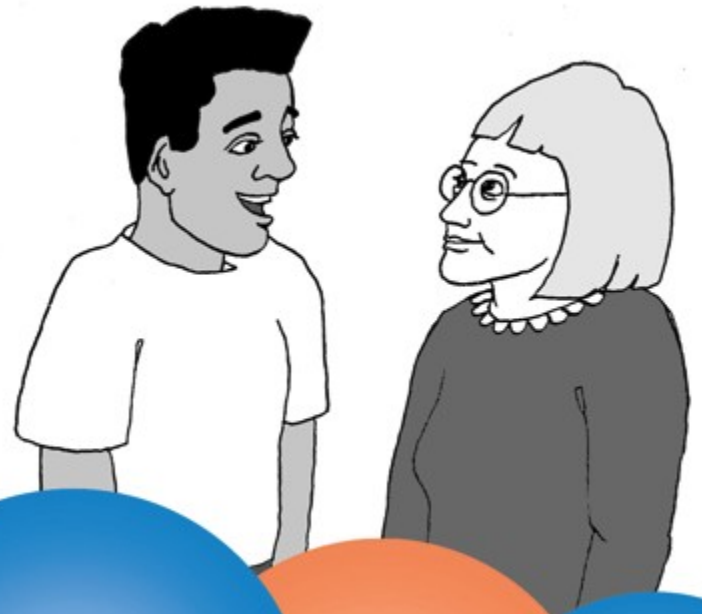


# Follow up support for communication leads

At Total Communication Services CIC we firmly believe in quality provision. Through years of experience and practice, we have found that in order for implementation of new initiatives to be successful, follow up support is often necessary.

For this reason, we strongly recommend that follow up is built into the training package.

Online support sessions either individually or as a group session can be arranged for communication leads



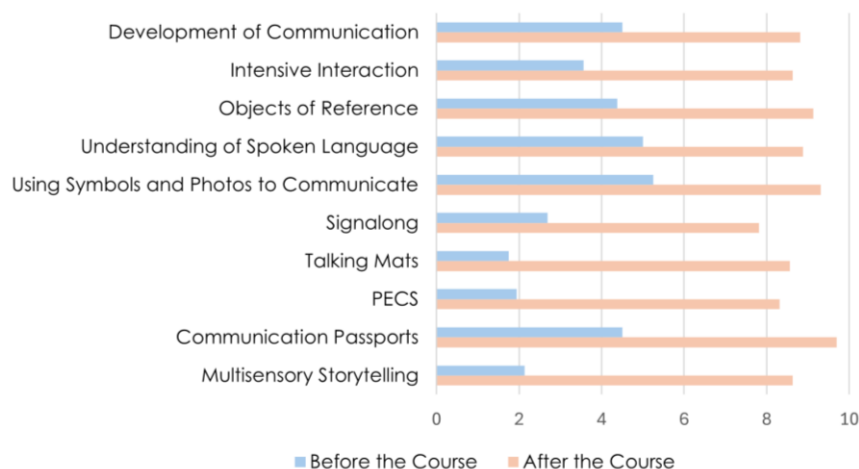
# Person Centred Communication Course

This course is intended as an overview of communication with people with learning disabilities, it is our most popular course commissioned by many services across the UK.

The course includes an introduction to communication skills, and tasters of the main approaches used to support communication.

Course participants: 25 max

**Attendee Knowledge Before and After the Course**



Thank you for an amazing training session.

Wonderful course, I've learnt so much. Thank you.

Well planned and prepared – flowed from one subject to another really well.

Really enjoyed and have definitely got a lot I will use from this course - surprised how much there was to learn.

Detailed presentation and handout, well-paced, not burdened by the training, good breaks given.

# Course details

The course content includes:

- Early communication
- Understanding of spoken language
- Symbolic development
- Communication Passports
- The use of visual support including photos, symbols and line drawings and talking mats
- Signalong workshop session
- Objects of Reference
- Introduction to Intensive Interaction
- Practical implementation of Total Communication
- Action planning to introduce changes into the workplace





# Core Capabilities Framework for Supporting People with a Learning Disability

## Domain C personalised care and support

### 13: Communication



Outcomes Tier 2	Material covered during
a) Know that maximising an individual's opportunity for communication, in all areas of life, is critical for supporting the autonomy, wellbeing and quality of life of people with a learning disability	All 3 days
b) Understand that each person with a learning disability may have a unique way of communicating	All 3 days
c) Understand that verbal ability does not always correlate with the ability to understand and vice versa	Day 1
d) Identify simple ways that can be used to check understanding and that can help someone remember important information	Day 1, 2 and 3
e) Be aware of basic good etiquette when communicating with someone with a speech impairment	Day 1,2 and 3
f) Understand the importance of non-verbal communication e. g: body language, signing, visual images and appropriate use of touch	Day 1,2 and 3
g) Understand behaviour is a form of communication, and the meanings that can be attached to behaviour	Day 1
h) To be able to use a range of communication techniques to convey information , according to the different abilities and preferences of people with a learning disability	Days 2 and 3
i) To understand the importance of confidentiality in interactions with people with a learning disability, including recognising the nuances and limitations of confidentiality.	Days 1, 2 and 3
j) Know why individualised communication plans should be developed, implemented and reviewed with people with a learning disability.	Days 1, 2 and 3
k) Understand a person's communication plan or passport, use it to adapt communication with the individual and understand why it is important to do this,	Days 1 and 2

# Core Capabilities Framework for Supporting People with a Learning Disability Domain C personalised care and support

## 13: Communication



Outcomes	Material covered during
l) Be aware of the impact of the environment on communication-knowing how to find the right time and place and situation for important communication	All 3 days
m) Know the importance of ensuring that people with a learning disability have any required sensory support ( Glasses, hearing aids and/or communication systems) to enable successful communication	All 3 days
n) Understand the importance of effective communication with families and carers and the expertise that families and carers may be able to offer to support effective communication with the person with a learning disability.	All 3 days
o) Understand the legal requirements ( Public Equality Duty, Equality Act, Mental Capacity Act and Accessible Information Standard) to adjust all forms of communication and information.	Day 1
Tier 3	
a) Understand why communication is critical for supporting autonomy, well-being and quality of life and how systems and processes can sometimes put barriers in the way of effective communication with people with a learning disability and families and carers.	All 3 days
b) Be able to improve communication systems and practices that support positive outcomes for people with a learning disability, including the use of assistive technology	All 3 days
c) Be able to actively support, develop and change communication systems for each person with a learning disability	All 3 days
d) Be able to support staff in understanding more complex communication needs	All 3 days
e) Be able to support assessment and interventions that address alternative functional communication	All 3 days
f) Be able to utilise a range of alternative and augmentative communication methods and services that meet the communication needs of people with a learning disability/	All 3 days

# The course will enable participants to meet standard 6 of the Care Certificate standard



Learning outcomes		Care Certificate Framework (Standards)
Describe how to establish an individual's communication and language needs, wishes and preferences	Day 1, day 2 and day 3 content Assessed via workbook	6a
List a range of communication methods and styles that could help meet an individual's communication needs, wishes and preferences	Day 1, day 2 and day 3 content Assessed via workbook	6.2b
List barriers to effective communication	Day 1 and 3 communication breakdown exercises Assessed via workbook	6.3a
Describe ways to reduce barriers to effective communication	Day 1, day 2 and day 3 content . Assessed via workbook	6.3b
Describe how to check whether the person you support has been understood	Day 1, day 2 and day 3 content . Assessed via workbook	6.3c
Describe where to find information and support or services, to help them communicate more effectively	Day 1, day 2 and day 3 content . Assessed via workbook	
Use appropriate verbal and non-verbal communication	Day 1, day 2 and day 3 content –assessed via final communication breakdown activity	6.5
Support the use of appropriate communication aids/ technologies	Day 1, day 2 and day 3 content –assessed via final communication breakdown activity	6.6

# Intensive Interaction one day practitioner course



Intensive Interaction is an approach to working with people who have severe learning disabilities and/or autism and who may be at an early stage of social, emotional, cognitive and communication development. The theory supports staff to create opportunities for interaction, engagement and involvement, and to spend time with people for no purpose other than interaction and communication. It is about tuning into the communication of the person with learning disabilities and picking up on their signals. For example, it may be that the individual already makes meaningful signals but, because they are unique to that person, others have failed to notice or interpret them. Intensive interaction is about interacting and having a conversation by whatever means possible, it may be, we takes turns with movements or vocalisations.

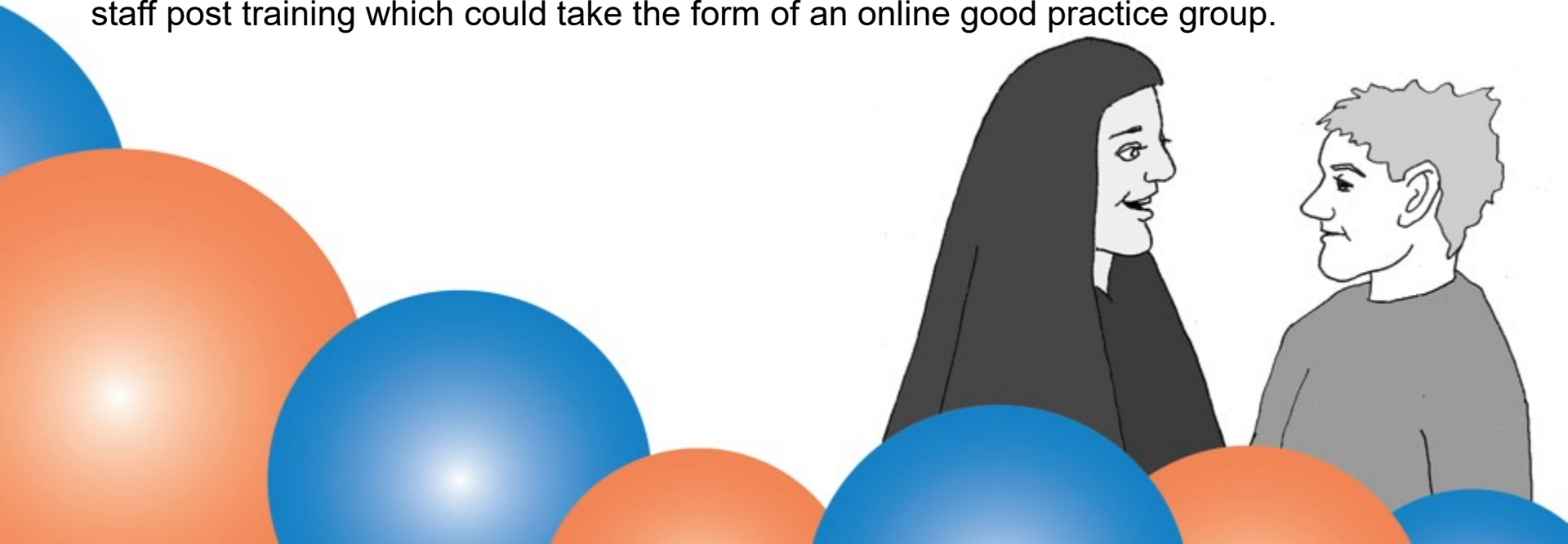


## What are the benefits?

Intensive Interaction can help to promote an increased understanding of an individual's way of communicating, thereby encouraging positive and meaningful non-verbal conversations.

Intensive Interaction can open up a variety of communicative experiences to the individual and reduce frustration and isolation which can lead to distressed behaviour. It provides improvements in quality of life through enhanced relationships and often boosts staff morale as they are able to connect with difficult to reach people.

Our one day course can be tailored to your service. We would recommend support for staff post training which could take the form of an online good practice group.



# Signalong

## What is Signalong?

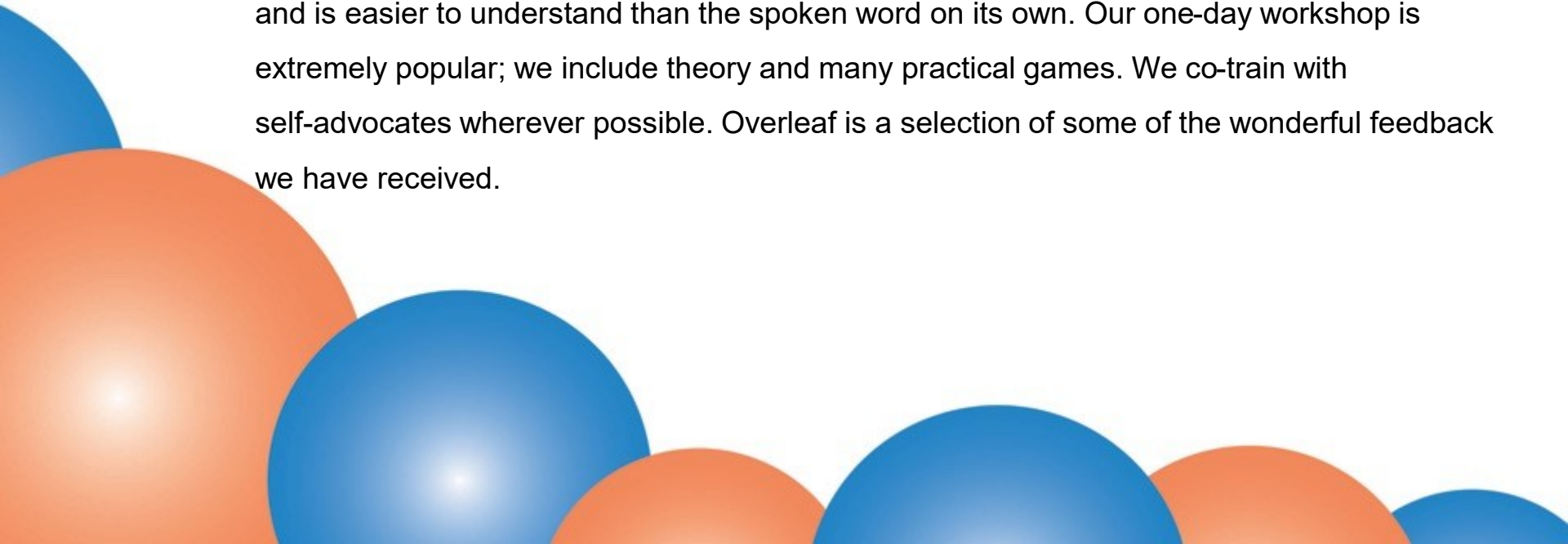
There are two main sign support systems in the learning disability field. These are Signalong and Makaton. British Sign Language (BSL) is the language of the deaf community and broadly speaking it is not suitable for people with learning disabilities as it has a different word order to spoken English, rather like French or German. Makaton and Signalong are designed to be used by people with learning disabilities the sign support is on key words only and everyone is encouraged to speak as they sign.



# Why should we use signing?

Signalong can aid peoples' understanding of speech and also language concepts e.g. 'behind', 'big', 'small', etc.

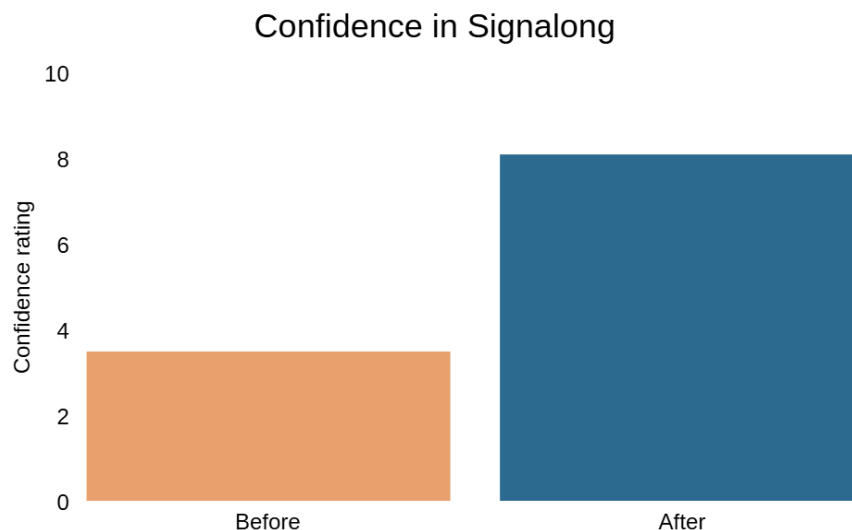
Signalong can also be used as a means for people to express themselves in combination with other methods of communication or just signing. Signalong can promote the development of other vital communication skills, such as: eye contact, turn taking, making choices, understanding and sharing information. People who have difficulty understanding and speaking can become frustrated or withdrawn. Introducing Signalong can reduce frustration and distressed behaviours. By using Signalong, we provide a means to communicate in a more acceptable way. Research has shown that Signalong encourages speech and is easier to understand than the spoken word on its own. Our one-day workshop is extremely popular; we include theory and many practical games. We co-train with self-advocates wherever possible. Overleaf is a selection of some of the wonderful feedback we have received.



# Staff Feedback Signalong Workshop –self-rating



- We found an overall improvement in reported confidence using Signalong after the workshop.



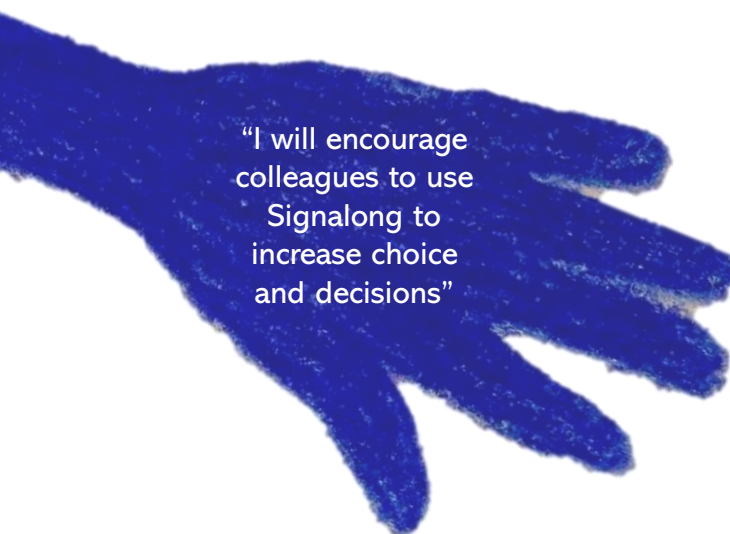
**Confidence in Sign-Along: Before vs. After Training**

Confidence Rating (1–10)	Before Training	After Training
1	6	0
2	5	0
3	4	0
4	5	0
5	5	1
6	3	3
7	1	8
8	0	8
9	0	6
10	0	3



# Workshop Images







"I will encourage  
colleagues to use  
Signalong to  
increase choice  
and decisions"



"Developing games  
and new ways to  
learn and practice  
signs are  
opportunities to  
socialise"



"Will help my service  
users ask for things  
privately therefore  
respecting their  
dignity"



"It gives service  
users better access  
to complex  
language [for  
safeguarding]"





“Signalong will help staff deliver more person-centred support by adapting to each individual’s communication style”

“This Signalong training will allow my staff to use signing consistently withing the healthcare setting”

“Signalong has boosted our team’s confidence when supporting individuals with diverse communication needs”

“I’m coming away with resources that will enable staff to keep their learning alive”

“The workshop has given us practical skills that we want to take foward into our day centres”



# Course details

Signalong workshops - 6 hours

Participants: 20 max

Signalong Foundation Training Currently this is a 2 day course 15 hours total study time.

## Follow up support

Support is available for follow up and implementation. We can support staff to develop a group for service users and to create and maximise opportunities for signing in your setting

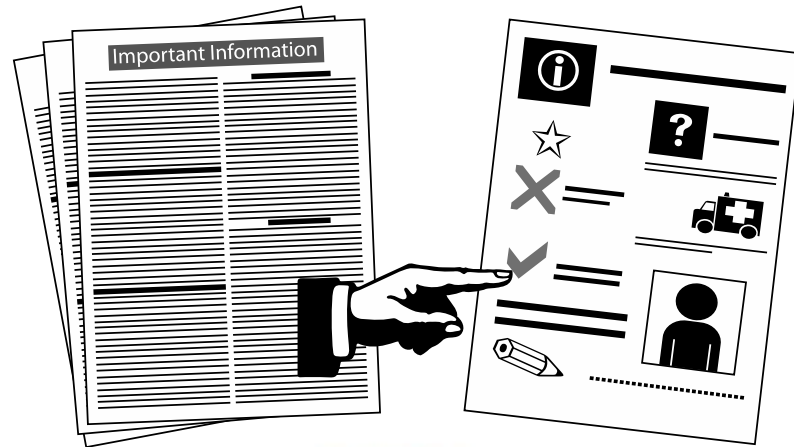


# Accessible Information

## What is it?

Accessible information is sometimes called easy read.

Broadly speaking it includes adapted and simplified information. For people with learning disabilities this often needs to include images which support meaning. In 2016 the NHS has launched a the Accessible Information Standard. This is known officially as SCCI1605 Accessible Information – it's a 'information Standard' for implementation by all organisations which provide NHS or adult social care.



## Course Details

1 day course covering the reasons we need to make information accessible, good practice guidelines and checklists for ensuring your information meets current standards. Course includes approaching meetings to make them more inclusive. This approach has been used in supporting parents with learning disabilities in child protection meetings and mental health hospital settings to include people in ward round meetings.

### Follow up:

Follow up support is available including technical advice and advice about resources.

We also offer a service to create documents on your behalf.



# Multisensory Stories

Multisensory stories are a relatively new and increasingly popular activity for children and adults with learning disabilities. They combine the unique human experience of storytelling and the importance of sensory stimulation to offer a unique activity for people with complex needs. The idea behind sensory stories is to offer storytelling

in a way which means the listener does not have to understand the language of the story in order to understand the entire activity.

They are usually around ten pages long and along with each sentence, a sensory experience is offered to the listener to support the language of the story. This might be a musical instrument, a cuddly toy to feel

or a button to press





# Why are they beneficial?

Multisensory stories are a fantastic group activity as well as an engaging and enjoyable individual activity.

Not only are multisensory stories fun but there is plenty of research which provides evidence of the benefits as well.

Our course supports staff to understand the theory and to create their own stories. Multisensory stories support :

- Learning and literacy skills
- Physical responsiveness and motor skills
- Behavioural and communicative response:-  
anticipation, recognition, attention to stimuli,  
vocalisations
- Social interventions





# Course details

This 1day course covers the theory behind multisensory stories with a practical session which may include people with learning disabilities.

Some focus is given to exploring different approaches to creating stories in your setting, for example, group versus individual stories and home made versus pre-designed stories.



# Communication Passports and Communication Support Plans

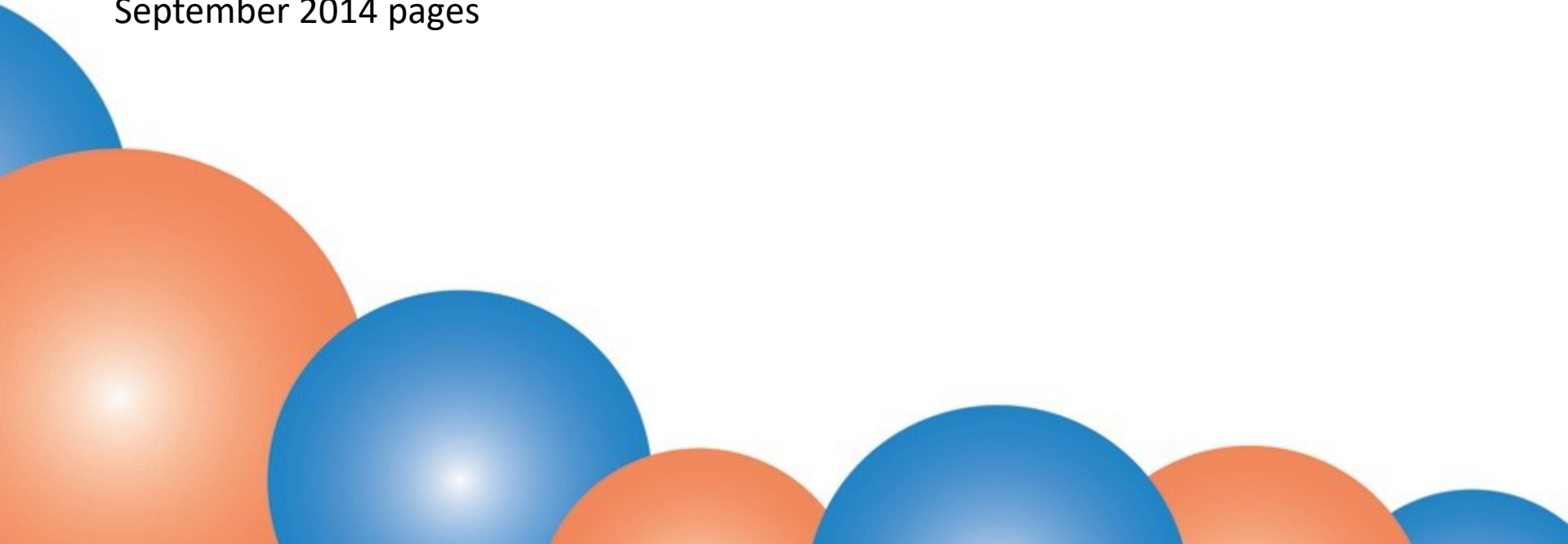
Good support involves evidencing knowledge of communication skills and creating plans which are inclusive and document the range of communication support strategies used by the communication partners. How do we document expressive communication? How do we evidence receptive communication skills?

Why is that important? This 1 day course explores these questions and can be tailored to the needs of your setting. It be delivered online in 2 sessions or face to face.



# Communication and parents with learning disabilities

Communication is often an area which is over-looked when working with parents with learning disabilities, yet many parents have some difficulties with literacy and with understanding which may present as non-compliance with parenting guidance. The communication facilitator role enhances the communication between provider services and families and ensures reasonable adjustments are in evidence. This approach is based on the practical application of the approach outlined in the research paper 'Supporting communication for parents with intellectual impairments: communication facilitation in social work led parenting meetings' Matthews and Stansfield BJLD Vol 42, issue 3 September 2014 pages



## Course Details

This one day course is led by a Speech & Language Therapist and focuses on the often hidden communication needs of parents with learning disabilities.

Course content includes exploration of learning disability and the impact on parenting, the communication facilitator role, advocacy and parents with learning disabilities.

Practical adaptations to meetings and parenting advice are outlined.



# Talking Mats Foundation Training

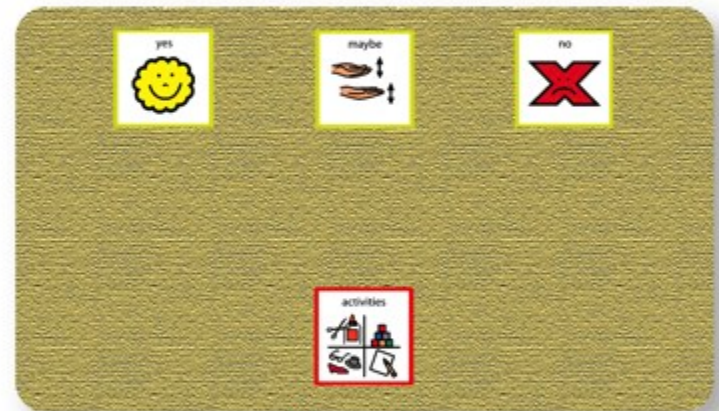
Talking Mats® is a low tech communication framework to help people express views and feelings.

The talking mat is an interactive resource that uses 3 sets of picture symbols (a visual scale, a topic symbol and symbols for options) and a mat on which to place them. This is a 1 day course



The person's thoughts are displayed visually, making the results easy to record and use to support decisions and on-going discussions.

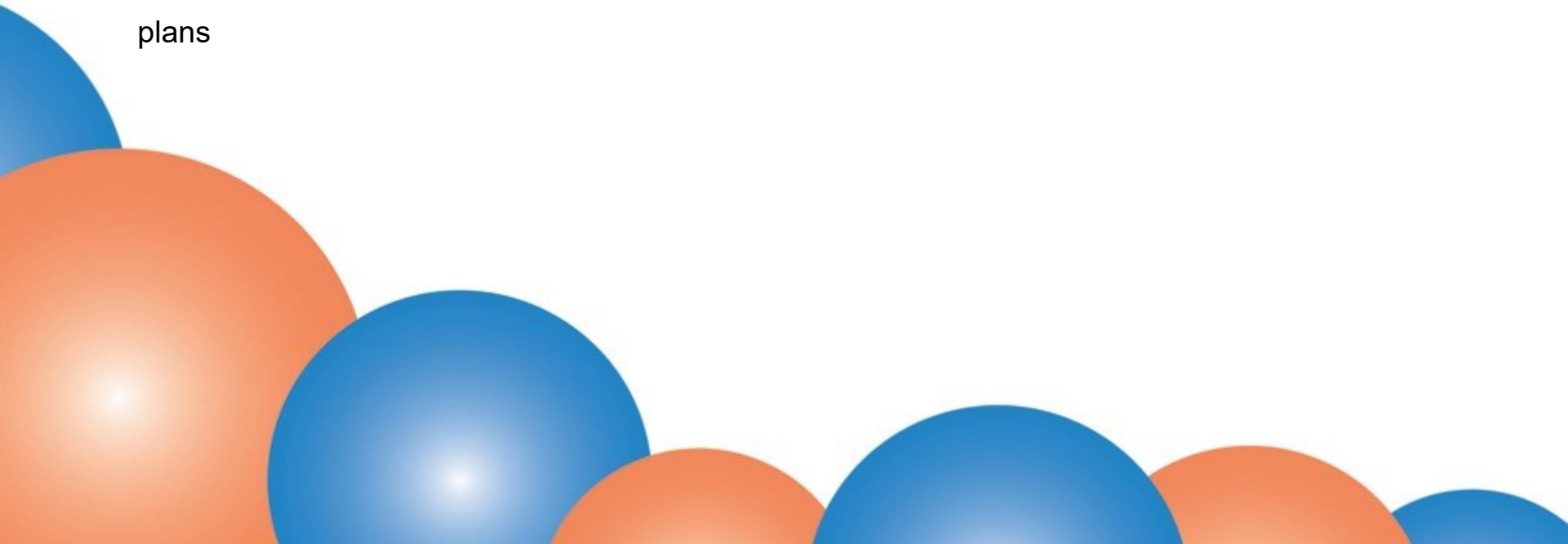
The Talking Mat® is designed to help people with communication difficulties to think about issues discussed with them, and provide them with a way to express their opinions, whilst reducing memory demands.





# Understanding – the hidden impairment

Research shows that we often over- estimate people's abilities to understand spoken language. We also sometimes under -estimate abilities. This half day session is an online awareness raising session for support staff. The sessions is designed to prompt thinking about what we can do, as the communication environment, to ensure we support peoples understanding. It also encourages staff to recognise the good practice they have already developed. The information gathered can be used in communication support plans



# Supporting People to Talk about Feelings

This half day course can be delivered face to face or online. It was written by Counselling Psychologist Siobhan Quinn and Speech and Language Therapist Alison Matthews, for support staff who may need to know a little more about mental health and how to support people to discuss their feelings.

We teach some basic theory and practical ideas. Course materials include communication materials

Contact us for further details.





Website: <http://www.totalcommunication.org/>

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