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Communicating Partners: 30 Years Of Building Responsive Relationships With Late-Talking Children Including Autism, Asperger's Syndrome (ASD), Down Syndrome, And Typical Development



Synopsis

Communicating Partners, the result of over thirty years of clinical practice and research work with pre-verbal and verbal children with language delays, offers an innovative approach to working with late talking children that focuses on developing relationships through mutual understanding. Providing detailed maps of what children and their life partners need to do to ensure effective social relationships, the program focuses on five key stages of communication development - interactive play, nonverbal communication, social language, conversation, and civil behavior - and five life-long responsive strategies to use every day to build relationships within the child's own world. Communicating Partners addresses issues such as: * What does a child need to do before language? * What are effective ways to help a child socialize and communicate from early play through civil conversations? * How have parents successfully helped children learn to communicate at home? * How can a child develop socially effective language and conversation skills? * How can a child with an autistic spectrum disorder, Down Syndrome or other significant delays develop rich social relationships? * What have families done to build warm social relationships with their children? * What is developmentally effective therapy and education when social and communicative delays are of major concern? Illustrated with personal stories and research findings, and containing a wealth of practical suggestions to help parents, teachers, and professionals understand their child's world, Communicating Partners is an invaluable resource for all those interacting and working with late talking children. --This text refers to an alternate Paperback edition.

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Customer Reviews

James MacDonald's book is based on over 30 years of research and clinical work at Ohio State University. Communicating Partners is an optimistic approach to working with children with communication disorders. It challenges practitioners to think beyond traditional therapy programmes and focus more on language learning in naturalistic environments and developing strengths through positive social relationships. MacDonald encourages practitioners and parents to consider the power of child-led play and advocates the theory that only once you enter into the child's world will you have the slightest chance of teaching them something new. Communicating Partners is a useful resource for professionals working with children with language and social communication difficulties and would also be of interest to parents. -- Early Talk Newsletter The book offers speech and language professionals a model to guide their therapy plans, but emphasizes the need for therapy to be generalized to daily life. Accordingly it emphasizes the need for parents and professionals to become partners in helping the child, stressing that children best develop social interaction skills within the family. Numerous anecdotes are included to illustrate how this approach has helped a wide variety of children and their families. This book would be of particular benefit to the parents/carers of children who are late to develop language for any reason, since it provides simple ideas to help stimulate social communication by following the child's lead. Professionals working with families may also find it useful to give ideas of where to start remediation and target therapy. Although it is not solely aimed at parents/carers of children on the autistic spectrum, it would probably be of most benefit to this group. -- Child Language Teaching and Therapy The author, who is vastly experienced, presents this child-centred approach clearly, offering students, parents and professionals plenty of background information and practical guidance. -- Care and Health Magazine --This text refers to an alternate Paperback edition.

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This book was the answer to my prayers. If you want to learn more about how we can improve communication skills, it all starts here. We were concerned because our grandson was not speaking yet (2.5) and was frequently avoiding eye contact. This book gives you easy to understand principles and exercises to help increase interaction with a child, and WOW - he has made tremendous strides in communicating with sounds, gestures, eye contact and big smiles. Great Great book!

This book is excellent! It's about enjoying interacting with your child, verbal or not. It's about respecting your child for who he or she is, and helping him/her become more socially interactive, not about finding a "cure." I highly recommend this book.

This book was recommended by my grandson's psychologist. He said throw all the other books away and we have, gladly! This book is our new bible. It has not only given us hope, but has made daily life less stressful and more fun.

I would have found this helpful if it was the first book that I had read on communicating with a special child. I had read others however and I found the information to be repetitive.

If you like Stanley Greenspan's DIR/Floortime approach, but need help applying it to teaching your child communication and language skills, this is probably the book for you.Dr. MacDonald's

approach is a developmental approach, where you get down on the child's level and try to get him/her up onto the next step with you. (For anyone who has read any Greenspan, this should sound familiar). Unlike ABA, it does not teach skills in isolation, and does not skip developmental steps to reach a desired "eventual" goal, something I've seen harm children many times. To give a fairly common example, a lot of schools push children from crawling into walking before the child is ready. Just because a child is 5 physical years old does not mean they are developmentally ready to walk, and most of these children suffer from problems with trunk stability and fine motor control that are directly linked to this skipping of developmental steps. I've seen ABA programs that push for language too early in the child's development leaving kids knowing a lot of labels for things, but still having no idea of how to use words to communicate with others. Saying "red truck" doesn't mean anything if all the child is doing is labelling an object, that is, it is not COMMUNICATION. It may be somewhat meaningful if it is used as a request (for example, the child wants to actually play with that toy). As a person with High Functioning Autism myself, I believe in Floortime and Communicating Partners as developmentally sensitive alternatives to ABA that are more meaningful to the child. As a Habilitation worker and Speech Assistant, I use a combination of these approaches with most of the children I work with. Good luck helping the children in your life, autistic and otherwise, learn how to communicate better.

After reading this book, and I have previously read other books by Dr. MacDonald, I must say that the techniques in it are the most family friendly ideas I've ever heard of! The viewpoint is so refreshing, to think that we as families CAN be the most influential people in our child's social development is a new approach. This book has shown me how to incorporate very do-able ideas into our everyday life. The techniques included in it are something the entire family can learn and can supplement any professional's course of therapy. Professional therapists would also find this valuable...it concentrates on the social aspect of development, and really, that is the basis for all communication. To get into the child's world and to be able to match his abilities, without judgement or correction, has unbelievable, immediate results! I highly recommend this book, to families, educators, therapists, and physicians!

I am the owner of a private practice that provides speech and occupational therapy services to children with special needs, many of them falling on or near the autism spectrum. Communicating Partners is the book that my speech therapists consistently recommend to parents of young children looking to support their child's language development. It is also a good book for professionals and

my therapists have used it as the basis for ongoing discussion about therapy provision.

When we started doing the things suggested in this book our sons language and communication started to grow much more than before. The method is very easy, and yet so hard. The point is that to help our son develop, we have to change to fit him. This book covers all you need to get started right away (without even reading the whole book). It's great both for parents and professionals. My son has Down syndrome.

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