



Tips for making communication easier

Making talking and understanding easier: top tips

We all know that there are times when talking and communicating with different groups of people can be difficult. Some of us find it harder with people we don't know well, or in larger groups of people. Other times, we don't always know what to do or what someone has said. This can be even harder for young people who have communication difficulties. There are some useful hints and tips you can try to help make things easier.

I find it hard to know what to say to people when I meet them. Is there anything I can do to help?

Practise some good 'conversation starters'. This means decide on some things that you feel confident talking about and think of some ways to start conversations about them. This is helpful when you need to talk to people you don't know. Things like "did you see X Factor at the weekend?" or "what music are you into?" will help you to start talking to someone when you don't know them. But don't forget, it's important to listen to the answer too! This [article](#) has some good ideas for conversation starters.

You might find it helpful to practise these conversations before you have to use them for real. See if your parents, or another person you trust, can help you.

I always know what I want to say when I'm doing a talk to a group at school. But when I get there I forget it all. What should I do?

If you can, do some preparation. You need to plan what you are going to say. Remember to make some notes before your talk because this will help. You will be able to read through them before it is time to talk, and you'll have them there to look at if you need them.

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Call 020 7843 2544 to arrange a free phone call from one of our speech and language therapists or email enquiries@ican.org.uk

Talking Point www.talkingpoint.org.uk

Visit this website for information about children's communication.

It's hard when I'm in a group with my friends – I don't always know what they're talking about, they talk so fast. Any ideas?

It is always hard in groups; often the talk is fast and can be hard to follow. Be confident to say that you haven't understood. It is fine to say something like "I heard the first bit, can you just tell me that last bit again?" Or try saying, "can you say that another way, I didn't get it!" It's OK to tell people that you struggle with communication a bit and it would help you if they spoke slower, so you can follow.

Sometimes it helps to see what someone is saying to you. You need to sit or stand so that you can see their face when they are talking. It will help you to understand what they are saying.

I don't always remember what I need when I'm going out and my friends get frustrated with me when I forget things. Have you got any tips?

Visual reminders can be helpful when you need to remember things. Writing a checklist of what to pack for school or college, or a 'to do' list for the weekend can be useful for helping you to remember things. This means you can look back and remind yourself when you need to.

It can help when you've got tasks to remember too...some people find it helpful to make notes, to help them remember what they need to do. So, in class they make sure they write down all the detail of their homework tasks, or they write a list of jobs their mum has asked them to do. This means they don't forget important things.

I sometimes find I make jokes with adults but they don't laugh in the same way my friends do. What am I doing wrong?

It's important to think carefully about who you are talking to. Remember that you need to talk to teachers or other adults in a different way to the way you talk to your friends. Otherwise, it can seem like you are being rude or cheeky even when you don't mean to be. Some things are OK to say to adults, but some are better for your friends only! It can be tricky and sometimes we all get this a bit mixed up.

Useful resources

[Kids Helpline](#)

BT Learning and Skills [resources](#)

[Afasic](#)

[Talking Point](#)

You can also email any questions to help@ican.org.uk

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