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What's New in TheraSimplicity

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TheraSimplicity is an invaluable online collection of intervention materials. This virtual tool kit consists of high-quality images, activities, and speech-language-hearing, and cognitive resources. It also addresses all major content areas of practice identified by ASHA. The site is constantly changing to meet the needs of professionals in all areas of speech/language/hearing. This month you will learn about the exciting changes to *TheraSimplicity* that you can look forward to seeing in the near future.

New - End of August: AAC Components

Augmentative/Alternative Communication (AAC) is a low-tech way for people with speech-language disorders to communicate without speaking—literally, an alternative means of communicating. With this addition to *TheraSimplicity*, you can log in and download low-tech AAC materials; most commonly series of pictures that people can point to so specific needs are met. For example, a client who wants to put on their snowboots before going home can point to a picture of a boots on the AAC worksheet.



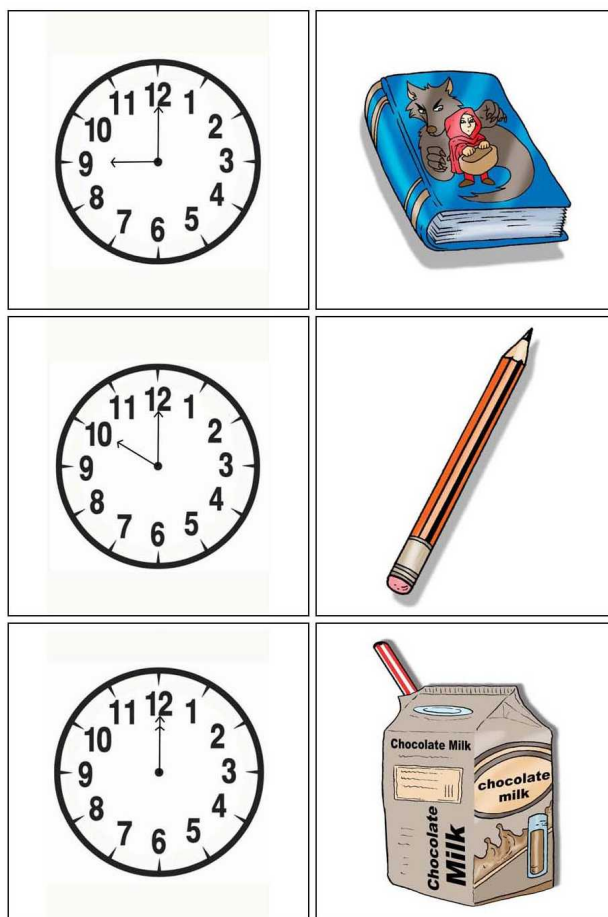
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Clothing



The new AAC components play an important role in assessment, as well. By using these new materials from *TheraSimplicity*, you can test your clients' aptitude for AAC before you attempt to obtain funding for more expensive equipment. In addition, these components allow you to create "visual strategies," which are ways of structuring an environment that show a person how to interact with that environment. For example, if you want to show a student how the school day is structured, you can create a schedule for them. This template may include a picture of a clock reading 9:00 next to a picture of a book, to indicate that the client has story time at 9:00, as in the example below.

Monday schedule



AAC components are customizable based on your specific needs. You can import your own pictures or text, or use existing examples. In addition, the AAC components make it easy to create storyboards—an especially helpful tool when working with clients who have autism. Storyboards provide useful ways of showing clients how to work through various social situations. For example, a storyboard can show a step-by-step process for dealing with difficult social situations, like someone pushing or cutting in line at the drinking fountain.

One unexpected benefit to grow from this new section of *TheraSimplicity* has been its usefulness in a classroom setting. SLPs in a school setting can use AAC components to create activities based directly on the curriculum students encounter in their regular education classrooms. In areas as diverse as food, clothing, animals, social activities, and science, these components help fully integrate therapeutic intervention with educational curriculum.

The *TheraSimplicity* team is in the final stages of working with a provider of high-tech AAC systems to include the company's extensive image database in the new AAC section of *TheraSimplicity*. Stay tuned for this exciting development!

NEW - End of 2005: Autism Components

In continuing with the commitment to improving the lives of people with autism, *TheraSimplicity* will soon include a section with intervention materials targeted to this need. The main focus of this section will be creating self-advocacy materials for adolescents with autism. Because you will be downloading actual pages to include in a client's self-advocacy book, materials will be static—you will be able to download and print, but not change, pages for these books. When it arrives, this new section of *TheraSimplicity* will help you intervene on behalf of clients with autism in areas like personal and life skills, emergency situations, self-advocacy, and independence.

NEW - September 2005: Focus In

Another exciting intervention tool for those of you who work with clients with autism is a new component called Focus In. Focus In contains 60+ social situations designed to help your clients see multiple possibilities and outcomes. The six main types of environments covered by Focus In are: home, work, school, community, communication, and social.

Recent Additions to TheraSimplicity

TheraSimplicity subscribers may already have noticed the new "Content Overview" option on the website's main page. This feature allows you to view what is contained in the entire *TheraSimplicity* application. Anyone visiting the website can view the "Content Overview" online or print it out. *TheraSimplicity* members can also use this to navigate through the site—simply click on any link within this section to be taken right to the page you want. To keep the application relevant, the "Content Overview" function is automatically updated whenever anything new is added to the site.

Coming Soon to TheraSimplicity!

The *TheraSimplicity* team is working with an IT consultant on an "Email for Literacy" campaign informational component. This will show you how best to use email to promote your literacy campaigns.

TheraSimplicity is always relevant, growing, and improving. Stay tuned for ongoing updates to this invaluable online tool kit.

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