



KEYCOMM NEWS

Welcome to the latest Keycomm newsletter. It's been a while since our last letter so this edition is full of updates, resources and useful information.

Launch of CODES Toolkit



The CODES Activity Toolkit has been developed to accompany the C.O.D.E.S Framework. Practitioners wanted some guidance to identify activities which would develop various skills and competencies. The activities in the Toolkit have been collected and tested from a variety of therapists and teachers across Scotland.

Each activity is linked to a C.O.D.E.S skill and the Curriculum for Excellence and are intended to be used with an individual AAC User or a small group. We have also included additional activities that will involve the whole school or centre.

Practitioners who live and work in Edinburgh and the Lothians can get a free copy by contacting Keycomm.

Lots more information can be found on our CODES website. <https://codesframework.wordpress.com/>

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- The Launch of CODES Toolkit
- Learners With Complex Learning Difficulties: A Resource book for teachers and teaching assistants
- Eye Gaze Seminar
- Upcoming events
- Books Beyond Words - Right To Speak

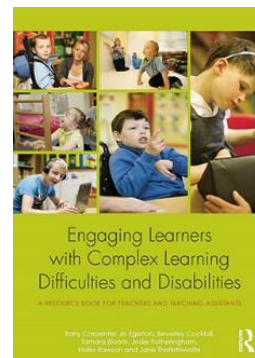
Baby News!



A big 'congratulations' to Lindsay Lambert from all of your colleagues on the birth of your bonny boy Finn Thomas Lambert. Have a wonderful Christmas and New Year with your new family!

Engaging Learners With Complex Learning Difficulties: A Resource book for teachers and teaching assistants

Practitioners may be interested in this book which describes a project started in 2009. The study involved special schools and special needs practitioners, observing and trialing assessment resources called 'The Engagement Profile and Scale'.



The following extracts are from a review by Anne-Frances Royle taken from www.specialworld.net

The methodology, as defined by the authors, supports a collaborative and solutions-based approach to overcoming learning barriers for pupils with complex learning difficulties and disabilities (CLDD). The book provides a definitive explanation of 'Engagement for Learning' for children 'who do not fit neatly into an understandable category'.

There are many useful examples and top tips from classroom practitioners throughout and all resources are freely available to use and clearly referenced. Contributors include prominent authors in the field of special education and researchers from neuroscience.

Of particular merit is their emphasis on including the child's family network in the observation process. Among the highlights is a thought-provoking chapter on 'Mental Health and Children with Complex Learning Difficulties and Disabilities'. The book is mindful too of the need for school staff to maintain their professional development in this specialised field.



Eye Gaze Seminar at CALL Scotland

In September Call Scotland ran a half day Eye-Gaze seminar. This was an opportunity for Rob and I to listen to experienced therapists and teacher's illustrations of how they are using Eye-Gaze as well as learn a little of what CALL do. This was the launch day for the **Eye Gaze Software Curve**. Accessed on their website this interactive chart maps the software choices matched to key learning stages. The case studies presented gave us background on a variety of settings where this technology is enabling personal development, learning in schools, social interaction with peers and work colleagues. All described the need to evidence pre-skills for the initial funding application but one highlighted the need for sustained funding for updating the technology or software, particularly in the educational setting. The need for training or time for familiarisation for the client support team members once the technology is in place was stressed. Then there are the practical issues posed by the environment such as positioning in classroom, background distractions and, lighting.

I came away from this in awe of the interest and skill the speakers are all demonstrating in their work. Documenting what they do in order to present it to us is building on the evidence for the value of Eye Gaze in the augmentative alternative communication arsenal.

The Eye Gaze Curve can be downloaded for free by visiting:

<http://www.callscotland.org.uk/common-assets/cm-files/posters/eye-gaze-software-curve.pdf>

CALL Scotland are also creating a trial online Eye Gaze discussion forum. Followers of the forum can post questions, share insights and join in with discussions about using Eye Gaze technology to support communication and learning for pupils with additional support needs. Please contact CALL Scotland if you are interested in signing up.

Anne Moar

Courses at Keycomm

Don't miss out on the courses we are running at Keycomm! Booking forms are available to download from our website www.keycomm.weebly.com. Just email your completed booking form to Janet at Janet.1.ramsay@ea.edin.sch.uk to book your place.

21/01/2016	1.30 – 3.30pm	Boardmaker 6
28/01/2016	3.30 – 5.30pm	CODES Framework: Advanced Forum
24/02/2016	3.30 – 5.30pm	CODES Framework Training
25/02/2016	10.30am – 12.30	Boardmaker 6
08/03/2016	3.30 – 5.30 pm	Using iPads to Improve Communication

Right to Speak Books – *Beyond Words*



Following the Right to Speak project, all special schools have received a series of books entitled *Beyond Words*. The books have been designed to help family carers, support workers and professionals who discuss difficult issues with individuals with communication difficulties. There are a number of books in the series which cover a wide range of issues such as dementia, health, sexual health, depression and death.

Keycomm have a complete set of the books available for loan. Further information can be found at www.booksbeyondwords.co.uk



AAC Study Group

The AAC study group continues to be well attended for those interested in keeping abreast of academic and professional literature in the field of AAC, as well as sharing ideas and resources. The group are currently examining evidence based studies to determine whether using an AAC device inhibits or encourages verbal speech.

The group meets every few months and is attended by staff from a variety of backgrounds from across the Lothians. If you are interested in joining this friendly group, please contact Keycomm. Our next meeting is at Keycomm 3 – 5.30pm on 27th January 2016. Please contact Nicky Ford or Phillipa Rewaj if you would like to attend.

Contacting the Keycomm Team

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