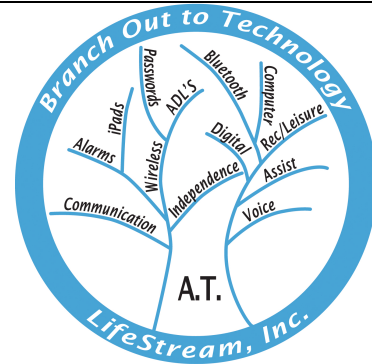


Assistive Technology News

September 2021



AT SPOTLIGHT: NATHANIEL PEPIN

Nathaniel, a student at Upper Cape Cod Regional Technical School, is more than just the average iPhone user in more ways than one. His knowledge of technology far exceeds that of most people who consider themselves to be “tech-savvy”. What sets Nathaniel apart is his curiosity to learn about the inner workings of various kinds of devices and his passion to repair them. At just 17-years-old Nathaniel is capable of refurbishing just about any device including iPhones, computers, Nokias, and much more.

Originally, Nathaniel wanted to learn how the technology he used every day operated, but he soon discovered a knack for it. Through first-hand experience tinkering with broken devices and guidance from YouTube videos, Nathaniel fine-tuned his skills into something spectacular. With the knowledge he accumulated over time, he began fixing computers for friends and generously gives devices away for free to others who need them on account of his expanding collection.

Nathaniel understands just how important it is for individuals to have access to technology. From a young age, he struggled with communicating and social situations in his community, often unsure how to express his feelings. Despite that, Nathaniel eventually overcame these challenges with help from a type of assistive technology referred to as a board maker. With the board maker, he created social stories to help him navigate social situations and complete everyday tasks. Now Nathaniel is past the need for social stories and is even an active Assistive Technology Ambassador at Bridgewater State University, representing DESE and sharing his knowledge with his community. He hopes to one day work at companies like Microsoft or Apple where He can further develop his skills and expertise to the fullest potential.

APP OF THE MONTH

Happy Color - Coloring Games (Google Play Store and App Store)

Coloring helps reduce stress and increases relaxation. All pictures are marked by number. Allows sharing of your finished product with friends and family.

For further information, please email:
assistivetech@lifestreaminc.com

6 Ways to Build Communication Partner Skills Part 4: How to Provide Prompts

Naturally, we often provide prompts and clues to AAC users. We use prompts to help them use their AAC system.

There are two key helpful prompts:

1. Verbal prompts, such as saying “Find your chat words if you want to tell us what you think!”
2. Gestural prompts, such as pointing to their AAC system to remind them to use it.

Both are useful and can be used as needed.

Another prompt sometimes used is Physical prompting. It includes hand-over-hand prompting. This is when we take the AAC user’s hand and make them point to the word. Physical prompting is less helpful.

Some people are tempted to grab an AAC user’s hand to help them say words on their AAC device. It is better to avoid this. It has been shown that modeling is more effective than hand-over-hand prompting for learning skills effectively. In addition, using physical prompting does not support those safe practices important to protect vulnerability.

Lastly, we should try to avoid providing too many prompts.

Think of ways to fade prompts over time.

Remember, regardless of how often we provide prompts or what type of prompts we provide, providing a model is still the most useful strategies we can use.

And when allowing time and providing prompts gets no response from the AAC user, just provide a full model of the possible words suitable in the conversation.

from: Communication Partner Skills for AAC Users



Guess the Device – August 2021

Congratulations to August’s winner Gregg Fitzgerald who correctly guessed “Amazon Smart Plug”.