Communicate & Include

Technology and Inclusive Education

Title

Communicate & Include — Technology and Inclusive Education

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Introduction

Making Communication Access a reality means to ensure that the communication modalities used and the information made available guarantees that everyone, including those with special needs, understands and is able to be an active partner in conversations, choices and decision making. The Triangle of Accessible Communication therefore comprises the adequacy of ways of interacting with other people, the creation of environments that facilitate communication and the adaptation of documents with relevant information so that everyone can participate in communication (Connect, 2008)[1].

Having the principle of Accessible Communication in mind, the project **"Communicate & Include - Technology and Inclusive Education"**, funded by the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, has proved to be a contribution of excellence, for the reason that it devoted a much needed time and space to reflect upon this topic, on the daily life of professionals and families from the CRTIC Coimbra coverage area. Thus, teachers, therapists, school assistants, families and others had access to **awareness-raising actions** - **"Technology & Innovation: Communication Access in Education"** -, **training courses** - **"Communicating & Including: Production and Use of Resources to promote Communication Access"** - and a **final meeting** that enabled the sharing of experiences and the acquisition of knowledge and skills, in order to improve pedagogical practices, promoting communication for all.
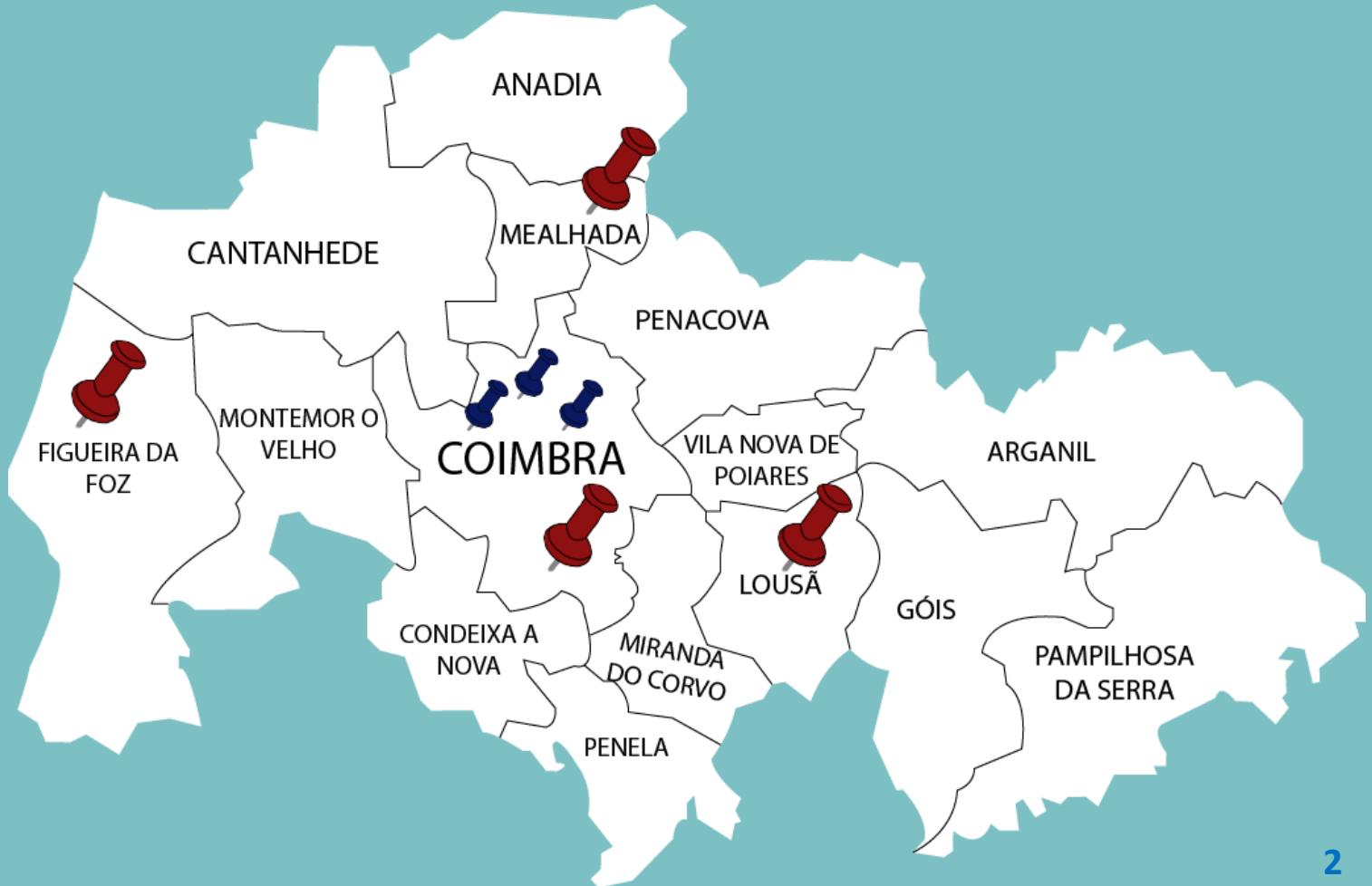
With this brochure, it is our wish to record and share the outputs and good practices of the project to everyone interested in using accessible communication, relate theory and practice, and spread the message that it is possible to substantially improve communication among all with small "gestures" of each one of us.

[1]Connect—the communication disability network. (2008). *The communication access toolkit.* Connect: London.

Awareness-Raising Actions

Training Courses

ANADIA

CANTANHEDE

MEALHADA

PENACOVA

FIGUEIRA DA FOZ

MONTEMOR O VELHO

COIMBRA

VILA NOVA DE POIARES

ARGANIL

LOUSÃ

CONDEIXA A NOVA

MIRANDA DO CORVO

GÓIS

PAMPILHOSA DA SERRA

PENELA

OVERALL GOAL

"Enable educational communities for Inclusion through the production and use of resources that improve Communication Access"

Awareness-Raising Actions

"Technology & Innovation: Communication Access in Education"

= 4

Number

= 150

Participants

= **General Principles and Strategies for Communication Access**

Content

Training Courses

"Communicating & Including: Production and Use of Resources to promote Communication Access"
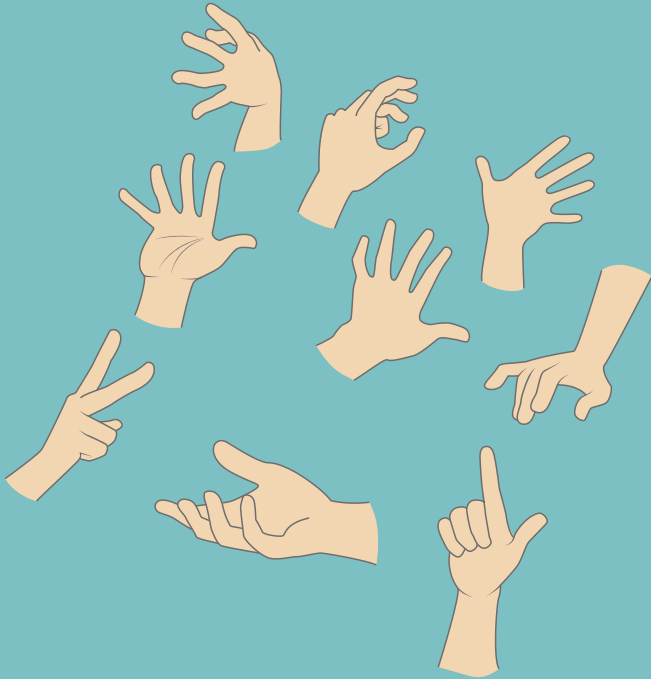

= 3

Number

= 76

Participants

= Theoretical assumptions and practical strategies to promote Total and Accessible Communication in a school context

Content

To reflect …

How do we communicate?

Once upon a time there was a beautiful ladybug. One day she found a coin while sweeping the kitchen.

I'm rich! I'm rich!
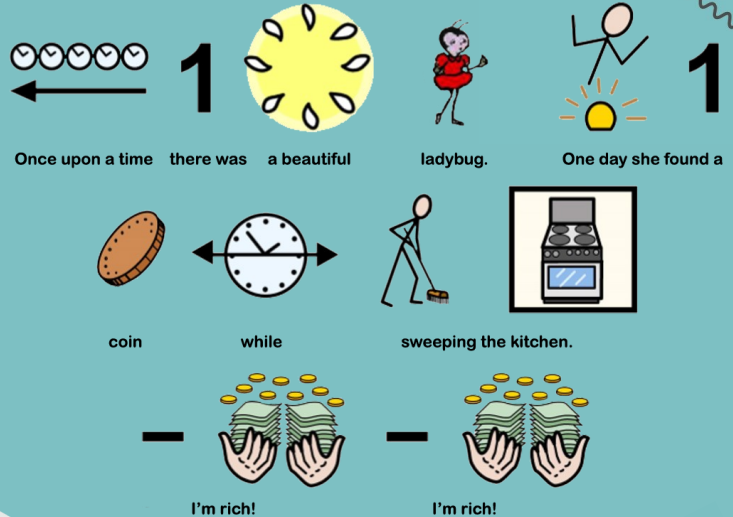
Accessible Communication is

TOTAL Communication …

It is not about the means or forms,

It is about sharing the message!

Reconceptualize communication ...

According to Bunning (2009)[2], communication is like a project between two or more people working together, coordinating their actions and reactions in response to each other and to the context. The author emphasizes the dynamic and co-constructive nature of this process - which depends on both the "speaker" and the interlocutor - and emphasizes the importance of the environment in communication; part of the meaning of the interaction is in the context where it occurs.

From a more "dialogic" point of view, communicating is, in a way, like playing with an air balloon ... now it is one's turn to play, then it is the other's turn to play, in an interactive process where the balloon does not fall to the ground.

[2]Bunning, K. (2009). Making sense of communication. In Palwyn, J., & Carnaby, S. *Profound intellectual multiple disabilities: nursing complex needs*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.

What if ... the balloon falls?

Are there Communication Disorders?
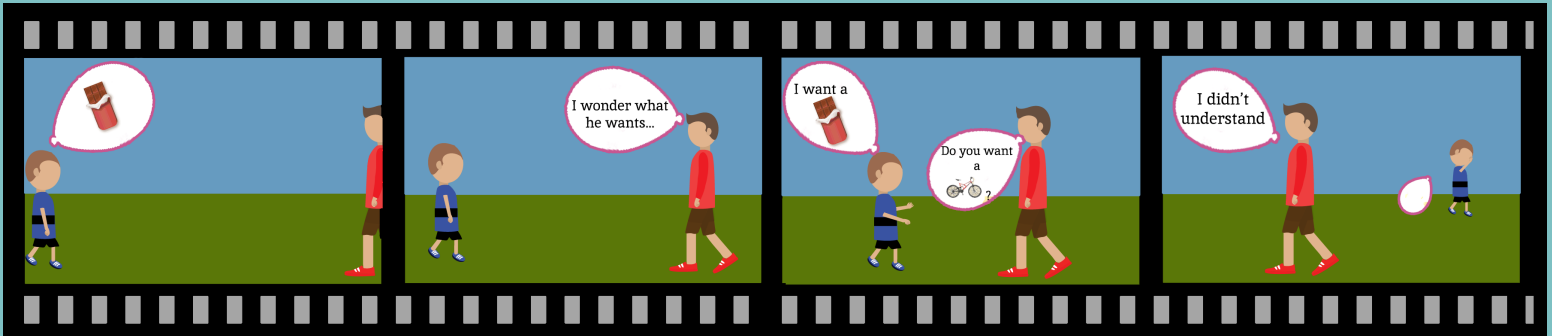
 Communication disorders, difficulties in interaction, conversation breakdowns, or simply misunderstandings are always reciprocal and generated collectively; that is, dependent on both partners in the communicative exchange. They are often the product of complications and failures in interpreting intentions and statements among interlocutors, creating opportunities for more in-depth dialogue and more elaborate levels of sharing meaning (Linell, 2009)[3].

 Is there anything disturbing or pathological when communication does not go as expected? Or is it rather an "open door" for both partners to adapt and (re)learn to communicate in order to optimize their relationship?

[3]Linell, P. (2009). *Rethinking language, mind and world dialogically: Interactional and contextual theories of human sense-making*. Charlott, NC: Information Age Publishing.

How to overcome barriers to make communication more accessible
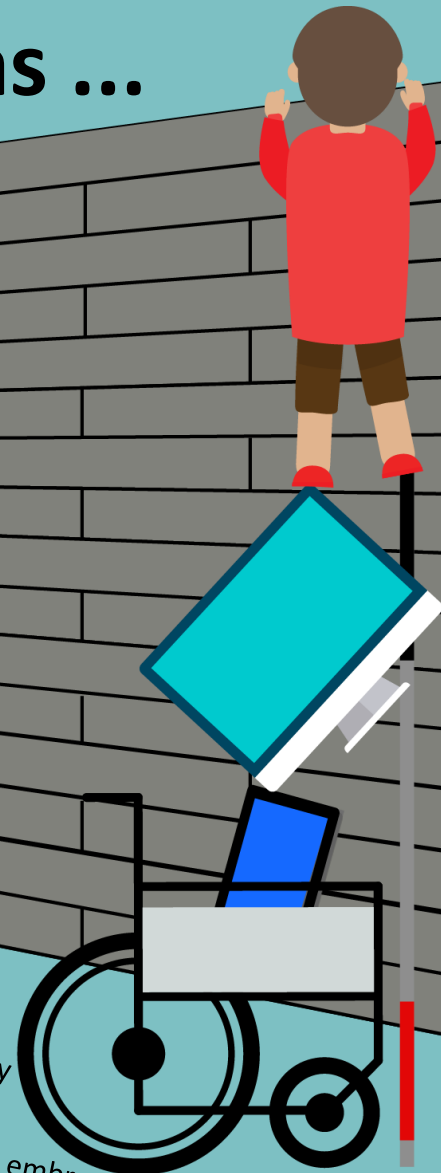
Communication Access Triangle

Creating accessible documents
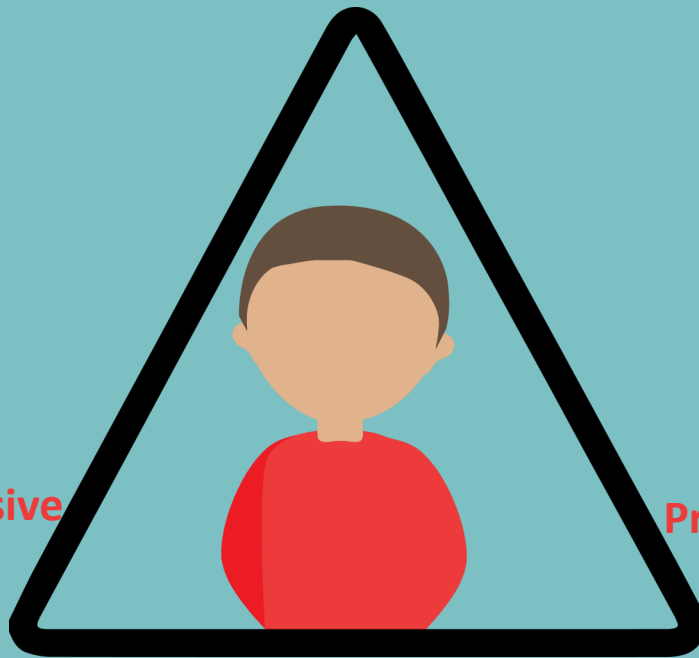
Assuming an inclusive communicative posture

Promoting environments that facilitate communication

Practical Ideas ...

The next few pages share ideas and experiences that can help any school become a more accessible educational context. Ideas and practices proposed by teachers who, in a committed way, embraced the project "Communicate & Include - Technology and Inclusive Education" and participated in the held courses . These suggestions are intended to inspire and promote good practices, such as those implemented by their authors.

Adapted Stories

"Making the most complex narratives simple and accessible!"

How?

1. Simplify the text using plain language.
2. Do not justify ... align the text on the left.
3. Create repetition lines along the story.
4. Transcribe the text with pictographic symbols.
5. Use illustration to demonstrate content.
6. Format and number pages, making reading intuitive.
7. Build support materials to enhance participation.
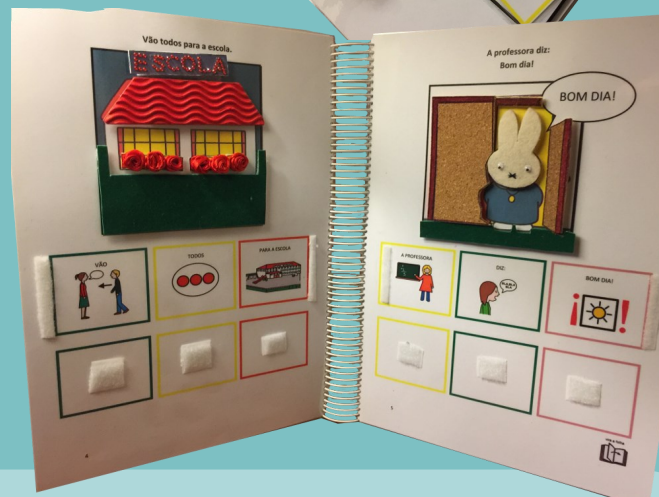
Why?

All children, even those with severe limitations, can enjoy listening to a story and participate in reading and writing events ... Especially if you use accessible formats and alternative means!
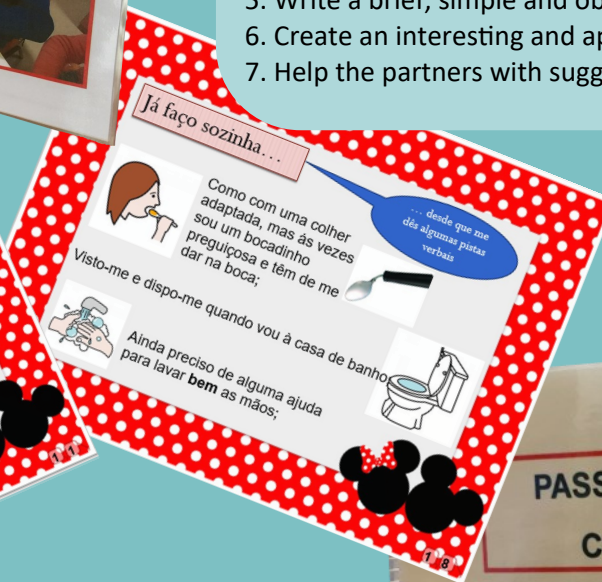
Communication Passports

"Knowing the other and its context is the starting point for better communication…"

Na realização dos meus trabalhos preciso sempre de ajuda.
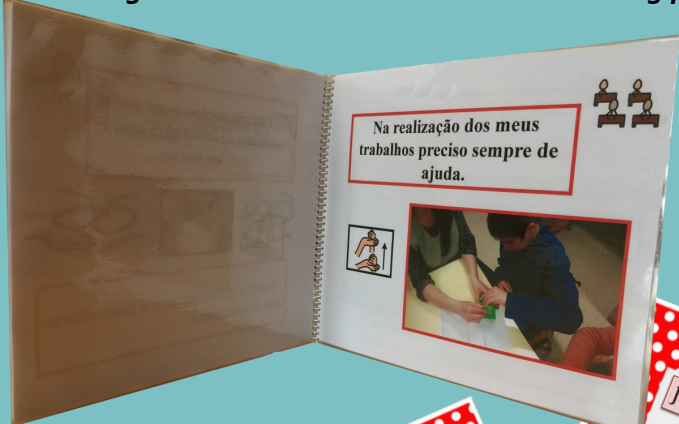
How?

1. Collect, as a team, information about the student.
2. Ask the family about what should/should not be written.
3. Tell the student's story in the first person.
4. Get the person known in his/her whole, showing difficulties, as well as abilities and potential.
5. Write a brief, simple and objective text.
6. Create an interesting and appealing document.
7. Help the partners with suggestions to communicate better!

O que não gosto …

chocolate
bolos
que falem alto
escova do cabelo
doces

Já faço sozinha…

Como com uma colher adaptada, mas ás vezes sou um bocadinho preguiçosa e têm de me dar na boca;

… desde que me dês algumas pistas verbais

Visto-me e dispo-me quando vou à casa de banho;

Ainda preciso de alguma ajuda para lavar **bem** as mãos;

PASSAPORTE PARA A COMUNICAÇÃO

Why?

Communicating is not always easy, specially when your partner's communication profile is unconventional or when his/her support needs are more complex.

A communication passport should only have one destination: introducing the communication partners and supporting them in the journey that is communicating!
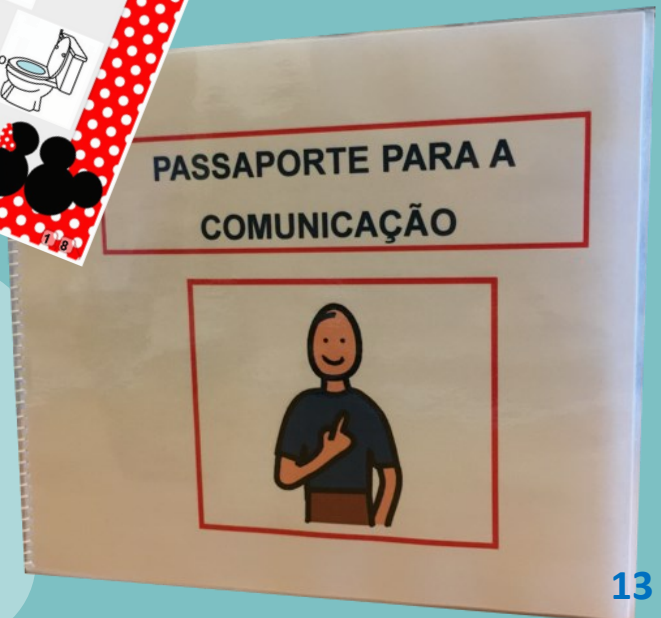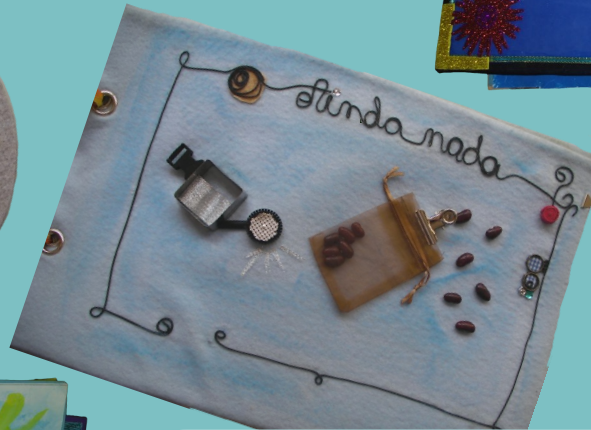
Multisensory Books

How?

1. Use clear and appealing illustrations.
2. Use simple narratives and plain language.
3. Complement the illustration with other sensory stimuli.
4. Ensure coherence between the presented stimuli (ex: image of a dog + fur similar to a dog's).
5. Create mechanisms and opportunities for interaction with the book (ex: open/close window of a house, combing the mermaid's hair).

Why?

We all learn best when information is transmitted to us in a multisensory way. In exploring stories and apprehending concepts, it is fundamental to use vision, touch, hearing, smell, movement …

The multisensory approach is the way to Inclusion that makes more "sense".

Social Stories

"Structuring and clarifying challenging social situations for the sake of success and social inclusion!"

How?

1. Create a brief and simple narrative.
2. Use plain language and direct speech.
3. Write the story in the first person.
4. Use a story format that is familiar to the child.
5. Use descriptive sentences explaining the situation in detail.
6. Use directive sentences, demonstrating how to act.
7. Use control sentences, helping the reader to regulate him/ herself.
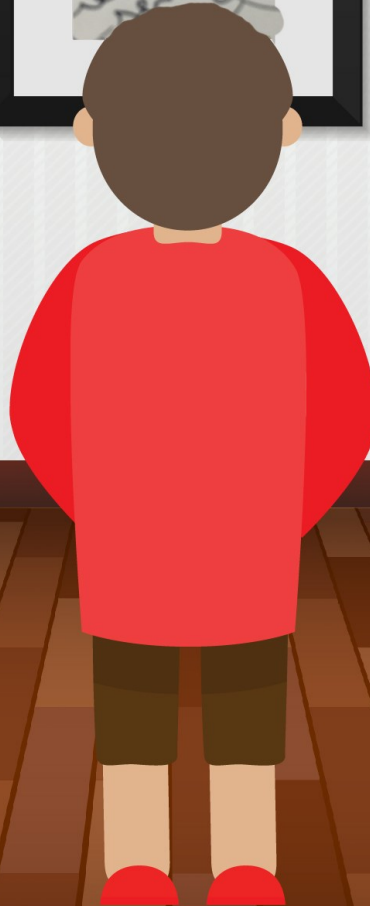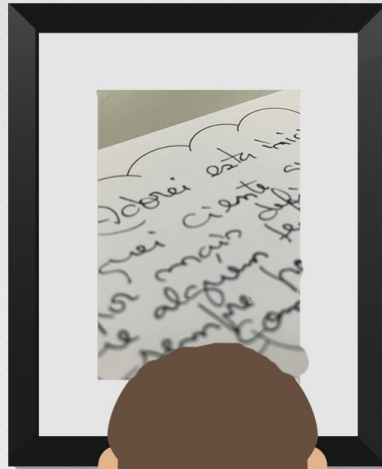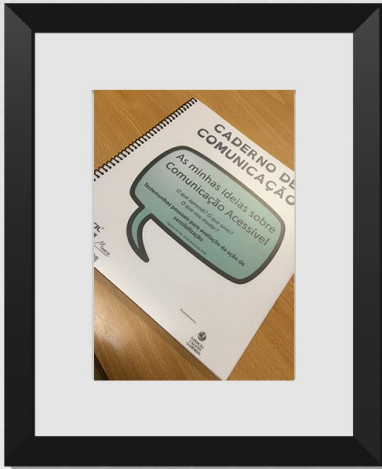
Why?

There are simpler and more complex social situations ... Some are real challenges for children and young people for whom communication is not always successful!

Social Stories present information in a simple and structured way so that everyone can succeed in any context.

What People Say

"Developing communication is more than talking. It is being an active interlocutor in different social relations ."

"We thought about the importance of using materials and technologies, as a support of pedagogical activities, for the promotion of communicative accessibility. "

"I learned that we should have a closer look at the other so we can communicate without misunderstandings. "

" The most innovative and what led me to reflect better on my teaching practices were the contents related to the phases of the fundamental development of language and communication: perlocutionary, illocutionary and locutionary. Using strategies to promote communication and with the knowledge of the Inclusion Star and Participation Web, I am certain the knowledge gained in these course will greatly contribute to improve my practice as a Special Needs teacher. "

" We emphasized our role in the adaptation and production of supporting materials, taking into account the specificity and particularities of the target audience, their natural environments and routines. "

"I intend to apply the knowledge that has been passed on to me, helping my students to make sense of the world around them, so that they can understand better the meaning of things and how they work, based on the experience of integrating a student with difficulties in interaction and communication."

"I had the opportunity to conclude that the way we conduct our activities is highly conditioned by the effectiveness, or not, of the communication between the participants."

Encontro

"Comunicar & Incluir - Contributos para a Comunicação Acessível"
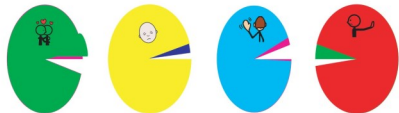
Auditório do Instituto Superior de Engenharia de Coimbra (ISEC)
Sábado 12 de Novembro de 2016

Projeto Financiado
FUNDAÇÃO CALOUSTE GULBENKIAN

Parceiros do Projeto

Participants = 260

Content = Complex Communication Support Needs

Teamwork with families

Presentation of trainees' work

Workshop: models and practices

Final Meeting

Useful Information

Blog PrAACtical AAC:

http://praacticalaac.org/

Website of the organization CHANGE UK:

http://www.changepeople.org/

Website of the organization Call Scotland:

http://www.callscotland.org.uk

Website of the International Society for Augmentatite and Alternative Communication:

https://www.isaac-online.org/english/home/

Website of the Intensive Interaction Institute:

http://www.intensiveinteraction.co.uk/

Website of the Aragonese Portal of Augmentative and Alternative Communication:

http://www.arasaac.org/

European website on easy reading:

http://easy-to-read.eu/

Website on the paths to literacy:

http://www.pathstoliteracy.org/

Website on social stories:

http://carolgraysocialstories.com

Website on accessible books:

http://www.booksforall.org.uk/

Funding

FUNDAÇÃO
CALOUSTE GULBENKIAN
QUALIFICAÇÃO DAS NOVAS GERAÇÕES