





# Communication Matters

## Caregiver Handout

### Suggested Activities

- ✦ **“REINFORCE LANGUAGE THROUGH EVERYDAY ACTIVITIES:** Use pictures to help when talking out loud. Use pictures of schedules and events if the person does not understand language well. (Cell phones are great to assist with quick and easy pictures of people, places, objects, etc.) Writing key words can help to communicate ideas. Gradually increase length of sentences as the person begins to have trouble understanding them.
- ✦ **“TODAY’S TO DO” LISTS:** Use to do lists, and other reminders close at hand where the person can see them. Mark off days and check off lists as things are done. Many people may have trouble with reading or understanding numbers. Develop symbols to help convey information if necessary.
- ✦ **GAMES:** If the person likes games, suggest games that the person knows. Instead of playing individually, suggest playing in teams so the person doesn’t have to feel the pressure of decision making or responding. Create cheat sheets to help with communication or to remember steps. Make simple card stands if the person is using only one hand. Be sensitive to the person’s limitations with outside friends and family. Include them in the conversations, but don’t spotlight them in ways that might be embarrassing or frustrating. Talk with them, not around them.



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COMPASS Study, Medical Center Boulevard, Winston Salem, NC 27157.

### Resources That Can Help

A speech-language pathologist can provide valuable therapy to promote communication recovery.

There may also be other resources in your community, like aphasia support groups and day programs, that help survivors work on their communication skills. See the COMPASS website at [www.nccompass-study.org](http://www.nccompass-study.org)