TICtalk

Touch Initiated Communication for Children with DeafBlindness and Multiple Disabilities

EHDI Meeting 2016
What is TICtalk?

• TICtalk is a system of touch signs/cues that are:
  • Standardized
  • Based on ASL signs, gestures, and primitive reflexes
  • Chosen for transition from receptive to expressive communication
Why do we need it?

• The current paradigm:
  • Touch cues
  • Arbitrary
  • Unique to the individual—limits communication partners and opportunities
• Once child gets to school setting, cues are used inconsistently, if at all
Who is it for?

- Children who are deafblind (combined vision and hearing loss) or have multiple disabilities.
- ~90% of children who are deafblind have an additional disability.
- ~40% have 4 or more additional disabilities.
TICtalk
Level One
“The Big Hand”
Receptive Communication
12 Touch Signs
Double Trill--tap the ring, middle and pointer finger of the Big Hand in quick succession, two times, on child's shoulder.
This produces a sensation that is distinct from the random jostling that occurs during normal handling, and notifies the child that the touches that follow are deliberate and have meaning. This sign is to be used at the beginning of each interaction.
Joint Attention

Place the index finger of the Big Hand under and into the palm of the little hand. This will facilitate hand-under-hand exploration, as well as lay the foundation for the transition from receptive to expressive communication.
**Eat**

*Grouped fingers and thumb of Big Hand (flat "o") touch corner of child's mouth. Based on primitive reflex. Transitory to ASL sign for "eat".*
Wash

Closed fist of Big Hand ("a" shape) rubs up and down child's forearm. Based on ASL for "wash".
Dress

Big Hand squeezes and then brushes down twice on part of body (arm, leg, foot,) to be clothed. Based on combined signs for clothing.
Diaper

Index and middle fingers of Big Hand tap thumbs twice at child's waist/hips. Based on ASL for "diaper". Transitory to ASL for "toilet".
Move

Grouped fingers and thumb (flat "o") of Big Hand bounces down child's forearm three times, moving from elbow to wrist.
Based on ASL for "move".
Sleep or Lay Down

Open palm of Big Hand touches child's cheek.
Based on ASL for "bed".
Device (such as glasses)

Index finger of Big Hand circles/oulines area affected, then taps twice (example, ear for hearing aids.)
Hurt

Big Hands make "C" shapes with index finger and thumb. Place on child's forearm and twist gently in opposite directions. This should be used to give the child warning of something that is likely to be unpleasant or painful but unavoidable, such as a shot at the doctor's office. It is hoped that because the child may come to trust such a warning, their anxiety level may be decreased the rest of the time.
Big Hands grasp both little hands from the bottom so that they are thumbs up, palms facing, then turn the little hands so the palms face downwards, twice. Based on ASL sign for "finished".
Goodbye

Big Hands grasps the little hands and slide down along the little hands and off of the fingertips.
Also...

- Whenever possible, maintain contact
- If contact has been interrupted, repeat Communicative Intent sign before reinitiating communication
- Selecting a name sign
Levels One and Two
The Big Hand and the Little Hand

• Level one “Big Hand” is receptive only
• Level two “Little Hand” transitions the student from receptive to expressive communication using a variety of techniques (such as hand-under-hand exploration and co-active signing,) and requires much more intensive training
• Most people will only need to be trained in level one
Certified Trainers

• Authorized to train and certify others in level one of TICtalk Touch Initiated Communication
• Website TICtalk.org
• Cards, certificates, training materials will all be available online at no cost
• Certification good for one year, renewal
• Prerequisite for level two certification
• Participate in creating and designing the program