

Diane Pepper

Subtle Communications

Deanna is a multi-modal communicator, using speech (severely apraxic), Springboard, signs, gestures & vocalizations.

Lately, I've been noticing the variety of strategies she uses to communicate. For instance, while watching TV a commercial came on to advertise Ocean City. We were in a crowded room & I was immersed in a conversation. Immediately, she began saying "yeah, yeah?" while looking directly at me (not the TV). As I realized she was asking me something I quickly scanned the room to try to pinpoint what it was & there was the tail end of the commercial. She was asking me if we're going to the beach this summer. Something that is very important to her. She does this occasionally too by pointing at a picture on the wall of us at the beach.

Also, while flipping through print materials she's shown me movies that they watched in school, food items that she likes or games she enjoys. Recently, she has begun to enjoy playing on the Wii gaming system & has decided it's easier to point to her choice of game on the box cover instead of telling me on her device.

Still, as always she's listening & responding to conversations around her. However, if those who are near miss these attempts, she will give up & wave her hand away as if to say 'forget it'. My biggest concern is many people who know, love & support her continue to be unaware of these subtle communications.

Diane Pepper

4/18/08