



Making Connections: Intensive Interaction

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What is Intensive Interaction?

Intensive Interaction is a social communication approach developed in the 1980s by teachers Dr Dave Hewett OBE and Prof Melanie Nind.

Intensive Interaction was researched and developed by the staff team at Harperbury Hospital School with students with severe learning disabilities and autism who were socially withdrawn and appeared unable to understand or enjoy human social interaction.

See - Nind, M. & Hewett, D. (1994) *Access to Communication: developing basic communication with people who have severe learning difficulties*. David Fulton Publishing: London.

Intensive Interaction

... is an approach to help people with social communication difficulties, whatever their age, engage through and learn...



the

‘Fundamentals of Communication’

What is communication for?

According to Adler and Rodman in *'Understanding Human Communication'* (2006), there are four functions of communication:

- Social needs
- Physical needs
- Identity needs
- Practical needs

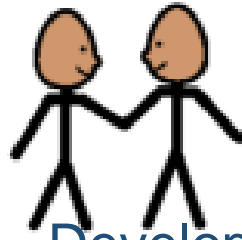
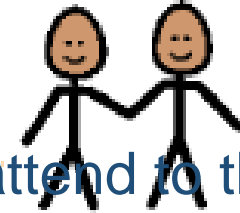


“personal communication is essential for our well being and may be the ‘primary goal’ of human existence”

Fundamentals of Communication

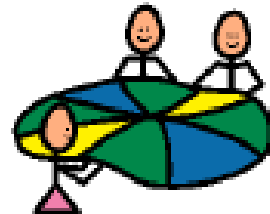
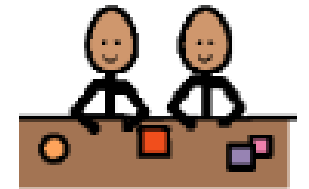
Child's skills

- Enjoying being with another person



- Developing the ability to attend to that person

- Developing concentration and attention span



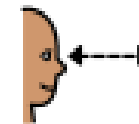
- Learning to do sequences of activity with another person

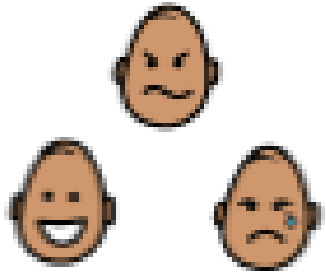
- Taking turns in exchanges of behaviour



- Sharing personal space

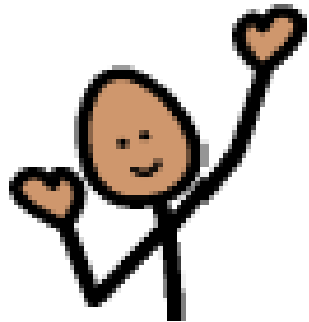
- Understanding and using eye gaze





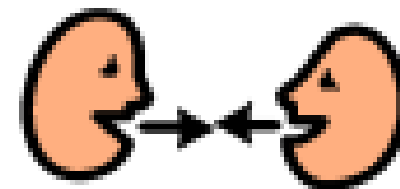
- Understanding and using facial expressions

- Understanding and using physical contacts



- Understanding and using non-verbal communication

- Using vocalisations with meaning



Learning the FoCs is crucial because:

- It is the first learning in usual development
- This learning seems to be foundational and underpinning to subsequent learning, development and psychological well-being

Intensive Interaction is partly based on what we know about how infants naturally learn the Fundamentals of Communication in usual development



Intensive Interaction basic techniques

- Tuning-in
- Getting in a good position for interactivity
- Being relaxed and unhurried ... having an 'available look'!
- Holding back, observing and waiting
- Looking for potential communication moments
- Allowing the person to 'go first' and lead the interaction
- Responding to the person in a variety of ways including:
 - Reflecting back and joining-in
- Timing responses and pausing

Adult's skills



The interaction stops when the person has had enough

The Emotional and Psychological Outcomes of Intensive Interaction (The FoCs 2)

- Attunement, connection, attachment, rapport
- Learning to regulate and control arousal levels - learning to feel safe, secure, calm
- Building sense of self, self-esteem and sense of agency
- Learning to identify own feelings and the feelings of others
- Knowing that others care and learning to trust others
- Developing empathy and learning to care - knowing/caring about how somebody else feels

The 'observable' outcomes of Intensive Interaction

Across 40+ Intensive Interaction research studies there is a strong body of evidence of novel or increased interactive responses compared to baseline conditions, such as:

- **increased social initiation, and more and longer engagement**

Nind, 1996; Watson & Fisher, 1997; Kellett, 2000; Cameron & Bell, 2001; Kellett, 2003; Kellett, 2004; Anderson, 2006; Barber, 2008; Samuel et al, 2008; Zeedyk et al, 2009a; Zeedyk et al, 2009b; Argyropoulou, & Papoudi, 2012; Harris & Wolverson, 2014; Rayner et al, 2016; Calveley, 2017; Mourière & Scott-Roberts, 2017.

- **increased toleration of, or responsiveness to physical proximity**

Nind, 1996; Firth et al, 2008; Zeedyk et al, 2009a; Zeedyk et al, 2009b; Fraser, 2011; Harris & Wolverson, 2014; Calveley, 2017.

- **increased levels of contingent smiling**

Nind, 1996; Lovell et al, 1998; Leaning & Watson, 2006 ; Barber, 2008; Zeedyk et al, 2009a; Argyropoulou, & Papoudi, 2012; Calveley, 2017.

- **increased levels of eye contact or looking at a person's face**

Watson & Knight, 1991; Nind, 1996; Lovell et al, 1998; Kellett, 2000; Cameron & Bell, 2001; Kellett, 2003; Kellett, 2004; Kellett, 2005; Leaning & Watson, 2006 ; Barber, 2008; Samuel et al, 2008; Zeedyk et al, 2009a; Zeedyk et al, 2009b; Argyropoulou, & Papoudi, 2012; Harris & Wolverson, 2014; Mourière & Scott-Roberts, 2017.

- **increased use of vocalisation**

Watson & Knight, 1991; Lovell et al, 1998; Kellett, 2000; Elgie & Maguire, 2001; Cameron & Bell, 2001 ; Argyropoulou, & Papoudi, 2012; Harris & Wolverson, 2014; Calveley, 2017.

- **increased levels of socially significant physical contact**

Lovell et al, 1998; Kellett, 2000; Elgie & Maguire, 2001; Kellett, 2003; Kellett, 2004; Firth et al, 2008 ; Barber, 2008; Samuel et al, 2008; Argyropoulou, & Papoudi, 2012; Harris & Wolverson, 2014; Calveley, 2017.

- **improved levels of joint attention**

Nind, 1996; Lovell et al, 1998; Kellett, 2000; Kellett, 2003; Kellett, 2004; Kellett, 2005; Leaning & Watson, 2006; Samuel et al, 2008; Mourière & Scott-Roberts, 2017.

Intensive Interaction on-line

- The Intensive Interaction Institute's website:



www.intensiveinteraction.org



- YouTube: *Dave Hewett Channel*



- Facebook:

➤ *Intensive Interaction Institute* 

➤ *Intensive Interaction for Parents* 

- ['www.ConnectingwithIntensiveInteraction.com'](http://www.ConnectingwithIntensiveInteraction.com)

(for research papers)

References

- Adler, R. B. & Rodman, G. (2009) *Understanding Human Communication*. USA: Oxford University Press.
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- Nind, M. & Hewett, D. (2001) *A Practical Guide to Intensive Interaction* Kidderminster: British Institute of Learning Disabilities.
- Schore, A.N. (2003) The Human Unconscious: The development of the right brain and its role in early emotional life. In: Greene, V. (ed) *Emotional Development in Psychoanalysis, attachment theory and neuroscience: creating connections*. Brighton & NY: Routledge.

following their lead

turn-taking

vocalising

minimalism

progress

video

person centred

wait

being with

rapport

thoughtful

join

foC

gentle

initiation

emotional regulation

enjoyment

communication

non-verbal communication



Wellbeing
Participation
Humour
Sense of self
Proximity
Body language
Facial expression
Vocalisation
Initiation
Language

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