

Online MDT sensory stories for students with PMLD during Covid lockdown

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Introduction

The MDT Team designed a series of sensory stories for students with PMLD and supporting carers and/or parents at home, using a remote platform. The rationale was to address students' sense of social isolation by engaging in meaningful social activities, develop communication through modelling good practice, skill sharing encourage parents/carers.

Methods

MT used a mix of improvised and structured live music to complement and underscore the content of the social stories.

PT/OT modelled best practice to demonstrate stretches and active assisted movements to parents/carers as well as teaching ADL skills eg. brushing teeth, preparing for a car journey.

SaLT liaised with parents/carers over appropriate use of low-tech communication aids for students.

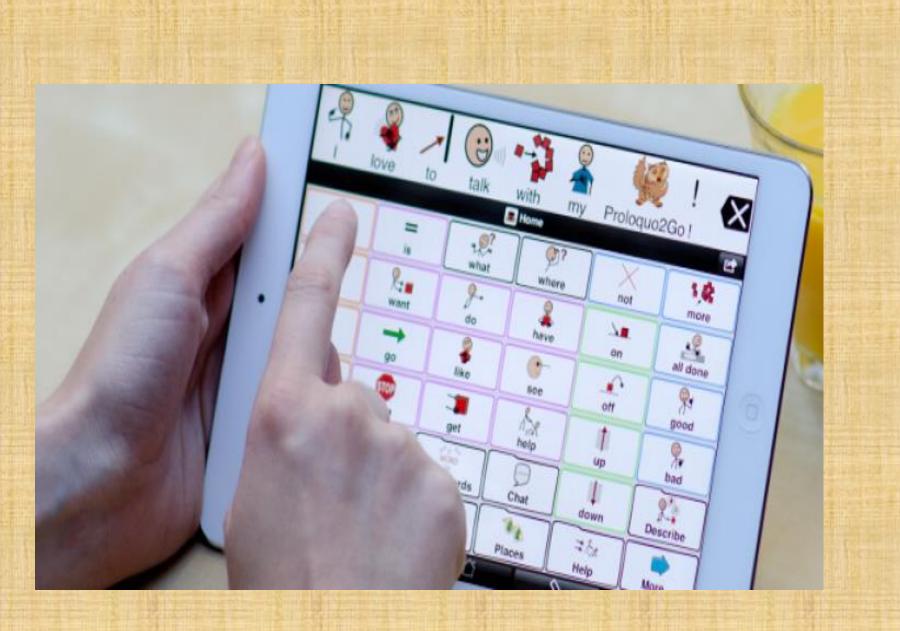
Results

The positive outcomes of the MDT sensory stories included:

- Exploration of sensory environment eg. the changes of seasons, through a multi-sensory approach with live music
- Modelling good practice with parents/carers, eg use of Makaton and communication aids
- The online video platform allowed direct expert skill-sharing with parents/carers, especially ideas around creative, tactile play
- Empowering students to communicate choices, likes and dislikes, as well as verbal and non-verbal feedback about activities chosen for the session
- Inclusion of ADL (Activities of Daily Living) eg brushing teeth, putting on a coat, going on a car journey, within a musical 'sing-song' context, introduced a 'fun' rhythmic element to a routine activity, which can be easily used in the home environment
- Improvised and structured live music-making created a dynamic and rhythmic framework for physical activities, which enhanced the experience for students
- Familiar pre-composed, repetitive songs during each session were used to develop the socio-musical cohesion of the group
- Students began to self-advocate for favourite songs, exercises, and social activities







Conclusions

A collaborative MDT approach, modelling best practice when supporting students, encouraged more creative and playful relationships between the student and his/her carer/parent.

Families became more confident and thus more pro-actively involved in the range of activities through the process of the sessions.

Strong partnerships and skill-sharing with teaching teams enabled activities to be transferred easily to the classroom environment.

Students demonstrated self-advocacy by increased activities choosing they through either enjoyed, low-tech NVC, Of use communication aids through verbal reflection.