

Communication

Expand the children's knowledge of a wide range of methods of communication by exploring the images on our poster together

Using the poster

Create an interactive 'Communication' display, with the poster as a centrepiece. With parental permission, take photographs of the children using the different forms of communication depicted and display these in groups around the poster, joining each group to the appropriate image with string. Help the children to cut out pictures of communication devices, such as computers and telephones from catalogues, and print out some examples of short emails and faxes. Hang these in the remaining spaces along with the children's drawings and examples of Braille, letters and cards. Provide a table below to display old keyboards, telephones, mobile phones, marking tools and sign-language books.



Activities across the curriculum

Personal, social and emotional development

- Point to the image of the child receiving a fax and draw attention to the 'Happy Birthday' message on it. What other kinds of communication might be used to send a birthday greeting? How do the children feel when they receive such messages?
- Look at the images of the child reading Braille and the child signing. Talk about how such methods of communication help those who cannot see or hear.

Communication, language and literacy

- Look at the image of the child writing and discuss how drawing and writing help us to pass information to others to let them know how we feel. Invite the children to draw a picture of something that makes them feel happy or sad. Ask them to write a caption, scribing for those who need support with this. Let the children take turns to read out the caption and talk about the drawing.
- Explore the image of the two friends talking. What might they be saying? Ask the children to think of some news that they would share with a friend.

Mathematical development

- Point to the images of the child talking on the telephone and the child texting on

the mobile phone. Let the children handle some real examples of these and identify the numbers on them. Are they always the same? Are they arranged in the same order? Discuss how people contact each other by dialling particular numbers.

Talk about the children's experiences of speaking on telephones and watching people send text messages.

- Look at the image of the child signing and explain that there are special signs for numbers. Visit www.british-sign.co.uk to find these signs, then use number signs in favourite rhymes such as 'Ten little speckled frogs'.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

- Point out the images of electronic communication, for example, fax, text and email. Ask the children to discuss their experiences of using this equipment or observing others using it.
- Suggest some communication scenarios, for example, an adult sending a message to say that she will be late home or a child communicating with friends when playing outdoors. Ask the children to point to the appropriate poster image linked to each scenario.

Physical development

- Look at the image of the child

communicating through sign language. In what circumstances might we need to sign? Visit www.british-sign.co.uk to learn simple signs to a favourite song.

- Introduce the word 'type' and look for the image of the child typing an email. Draw the children's attention to the fact that fingers and thumbs are used. What other forms of communication do we use fingers and thumbs for? Help the children to type and print out a message to a friend. Create a 'Message' display.

Creative development

- Look at the child sending a text message. How do we know when we have a message or when someone calls us on the telephone? Demonstrate different ring tones on a mobile phone or landline telephone and discuss the children's preferences. Make up your own call alert sounds using everyday objects such as a bicycle bell or car horn.
- Explore the image of the child telephoning. Make your own telephone kiosks from large packing cases stood on end with the lids cut off. Hang a telephone inside each one and invite the children to visit the kiosks to hold imaginary conversations.

Jean Evans is an early years consultant and author.

