



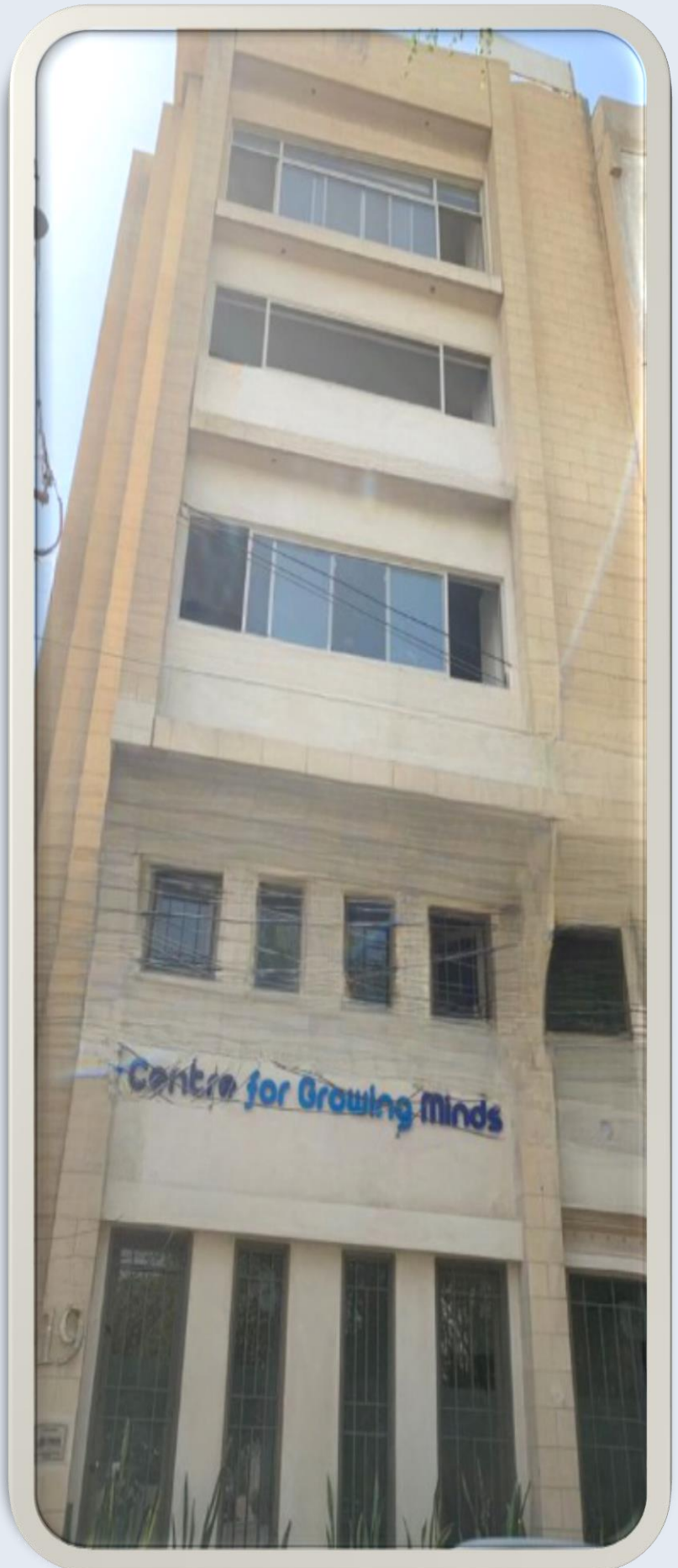
MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

June - July 2023

Volume 7

HIGHLIGHTS:

- Message for Parents
- Upcoming Webinar
- Updates for the month
- Focus of the month:
PECS and Sign Language
- Welcoming
Dr Shahzaib Khan





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MESSAGE FOR PARENTS

Dear Parents,

Hope everyone is well and taking measures to keep hydrated in this heat!

Just a few updates for the month of June - July.

First, our RBT, Talha Ahmed, will be leaving us in August to pursue further studies in the UK! We wish him the very best of luck.

Next, we have a new RBT, Aneela Masud, join our team. Excited to see her learn and get to know our kiddos!

Further, Sarah Amin, our BCaBA is back to the centre after 1.5 years off! She will be conducting sessions tailored to parent training only.

Lastly, we conducted a talk on the 8th July with paediatrician, Dr. Shahzaib Khan addressing developmental milestones and answering questions from parents. We are now pleased to inform you that Dr. Shahzaib will be available and taking appointments at CFGM for screening and assessment of developmental concerns. Please contact reception to book your appointments.

Gentle reminder to CFGM parents. We are available for meetings to discuss progress and address any issues you have. Meetings under 30 minutes are conducted free of cost. Feel free to get in touch if you have any concerns.

Have a lovely last few weeks of summer break!

Regards
Areesa Riyaz Chinoy

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ONLINE

WEBINAR

ADDRESSING PUBERTY RELATED
CONCERNS IN TEENS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS



AREESA CHINOY
CHILD PSYCHOLOGIST,
BCBA



AHLAM PREMJEE
BCBA



WEDNESDAY
30TH AUGUST 2023



TIME
11:30 AM -1:00 PM

REGISTER NOW

Ph. +92 355 222 1642

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UPDATES FOR THE MONTH



SOCIAL SKILLS MOMENTS WITH OUR KIDDOS

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Sign Based Communication Systems

Growing evidence suggests the implementation of alternative communication improves the quality of life for individuals with difficulties in hearing, speech production or communication. Like other modes of communication, behaviours such as gestures and body language are communicative and often occur alongside speech. Therefore, one type of alternative communication involves the use of hand gestures to form signs that convey meaning. These *sign-based communication systems* are used globally, mostly with populations who have hearing and communication difficulties.



Sign based communication conveys meaning, expression and emotions by assigning meaning to each gestural sign. Some sign languages possess the same linguistic structures as any spoken language would. For example, American, Pakistani and British Sign Language (ASL, PSL and BSL) are independent sign languages with their own grammatical rules. They are used mostly within the deaf population. On the other hand, Makaton, another sign-based communication system focuses on the combination of signs alongside speech. It is particularly designed to facilitate communication in individuals with typical hearing but communicative or difficulties in speech production. The table below gives an overview of the advantages of the use of sign-based communications.



Easy to learn	Signs are easy to learn as they involve the use of different modes (hand movements, expressions etc.) Coordinated gestures resemble the meaning they convey. Such visual cues make them easy to remember and relate to.
Spontaneous to use	Signers can engage in communication spontaneously in real-time, without having to rely on any external material.
Facilitates transition to verbal communication	Research has shown sign-based communication systems to act as a bridge for verbal communication. For instance, the repeated combination of signs with spoken words provides visual support. Continuous repetition reinforces the meaning of the word.
Reduces challenging behaviours	Sign based communication systems prevents frustration due to lack of communication. This eliminates challenging and aggressive behaviours.
Promotes social behaviours	Research has explored social benefits of sign language and have found an increase in prosocial behaviours such as initiating conversations. This results in increased inclusion and acceptance in social settings.

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Promotes language development	Sign based systems focus on key words. This helps in promoting receptive language as learners early on begin to distinguish meanings between signs based on what they see.
Language system is universal	Sign based communications such as Makaton are universal. This means, irrespective of the language a person speaks, the signs of Makaton remain the same.

The table below provides an overview of the disadvantages of implementing sign-based communication systems:

Difficult to teach other communicative members	While signs are easy to teach those learning to use them, it is difficult for other communicative members to understand and learn. This limits effective communication.
Requires pre-requisites skills	To learn signs, individuals must be able to imitate complex fine motor and gross motor gestures. This may not be possible for those with motor difficulties.
Impacts speech production	Signers fluent in sign language are required to divide their attention between sign language and spoken language. This can result in a slight delay in learning to make speech sounds. This varies from individual to individual.
More advanced communication systems available	High tech speech generation devices provide superior communication. They can assist in communication with various customization options such as voice and tone control. Such systems offer diverse options for individuals.

Sign based communication systems such as Sign Language and Makaton improve quality of life of individuals with hearing and speech difficulties. It facilitates communication and reduces frustration led challenging behaviours. However, Sign Language or other systems should only be implemented if learners are able to imitate gestures and other communicative members are able to learn and implement signs. Only then will sign based communication systems be successful.

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FOCUS OF THE MONTH: PECS AND SIGN LANGUAGE

**PICTURE
EXCHANGE
COMMUNICATION
SYSTEM**



Naiha Khan, RBT

Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) is an evidence based alternative communication system designed to help those who are unable to communicate through traditional modes of communication.

The system incorporates the use of pictures on a communication book.



Disadvantages

- Other newer technological devices are available that have speech generation
- Not effective for those with severe motor difficulty
- Individuals will only be able to communicate with 'provided' pictures when the book is available
- Takes time for a learner to form a sentence on the communication book

Advantages

- Facilitates speech in learners who have some words in their speech repertoire before PECS is introduced.
- Customisable according to the learner and their environment.
- PECS steps are easy to teach
- Cost effective
- Promotes prosocial communication and decreases challenging behaviours

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SIGN LANGUAGE



Disadvantages

- Requires prerequisites such as motor imitation and joint attention
- Limited opportunities for generalisation
- Communicative partner requires training to understand sign
- Social stigma may lead to potential social isolation
- Difficult to teach
- Use of keywords can slow down speech production

Advantages

- Promotes spontaneous communication– not dependant on external materials
- Reduces challenging behaviours
- Facilitates language development and transition to verbal communication
- Caters to individuals with different learning styles due to its multimodality (use of gestures, hand movements, visual cues, body language etc)
- Increases opportunities for social interaction and promotes social skills
- Signs focus on keywords, which increases receptive language
- Sign based systems such as Makaton are universal regardless of different spoken language

Sign Language is a visual gestural communication system that uses hand gestures, facial expressions, and body movements to convey meaning.

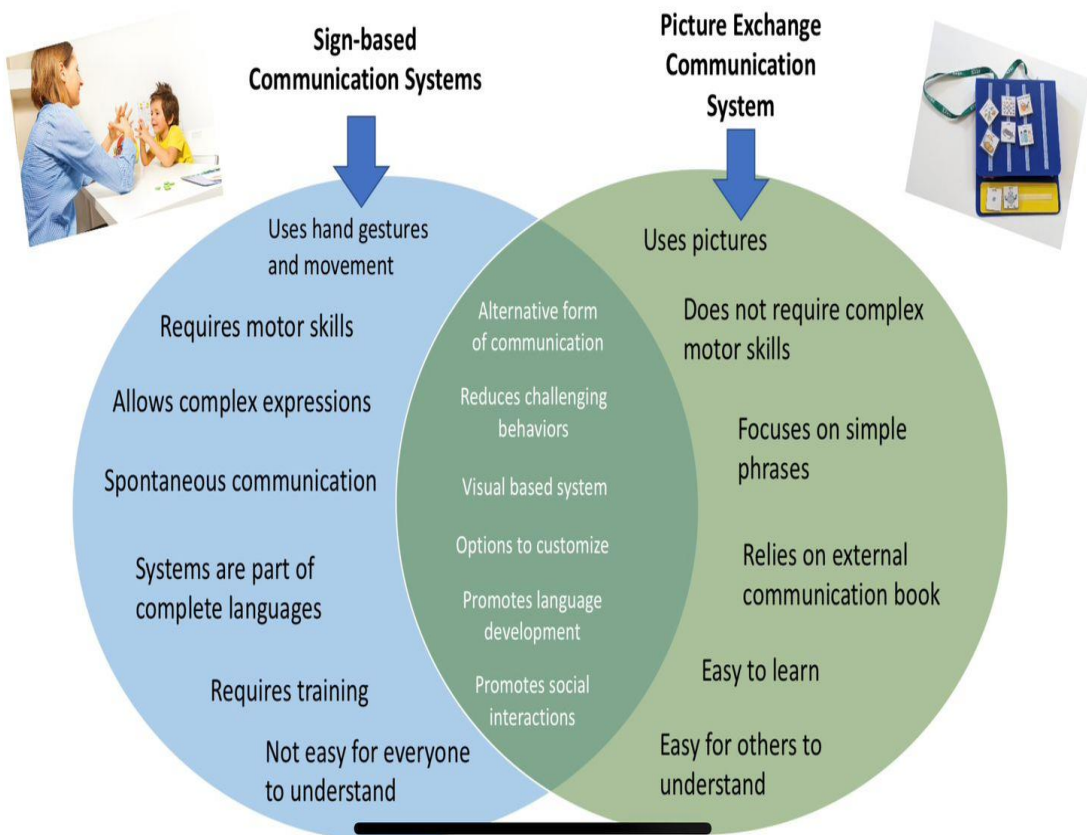
It is used by individuals who are hard of hearing or have speech delays



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COMPARISON BETWEEN SIGN-BASED AND PICTURE EXCHANGE COMMUNICATION SYSTEM



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WELCOMING DR. SHAHZAIB KHAN

THE CENTRE FOR GROWING MINDS
IS PLEASED TO WELCOME Dr. SHAHZAIB
EVERY TUESDAY & THURSDAY



Dr. Shahzaib M Khan

(MD, FAAP, Diplomat American Board
of Pediatrics)

Dr. Khan completed his MBBS degree from Ziauddin Hospital, following which he worked as a post-doc research fellow at the National Institutes of Health, Maryland. He then completed his post-graduate residency training in pediatrics from Sinai Hospital Baltimore, United States and is currently employed as head of the department of pediatrics at Ziauddin Hospital, Clifton campus.

TUE & THU, 3PM - 6PM

Dr. Shahzaib Khan's special interest lies in developmental and behavioral pediatrics, and during his training had plentiful experience and exposure in diagnosing and treating children with ADHD, autism spectrum disorder, mood disorders as well as speech delay, global developmental delays and intellectual disability.

Dr. Shahzaib will be taking appointments for consultations at CFGM on Tuesdays & Thursdays from 3-6pm. Please contact reception to book your appointment

