Discovering Communication Interventions

Building Evidence Based Practices

Converting them to Effective, Practical Teaching & Intervention Methods

Evidence-Based Communication Interventions for People with Severe Disabilities

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National Joint Committee for the Communication Needs of Persons with Severe Disabilities



Introduction

What is the National Joint Committee?

Mission and Purpose

- Provide information and advocate for the communication needs of people with severe disabilities

Formed in 1986 by ASHA and TASH

Current Member Organizations

- AAIDD, AOTA, APTA, ASJA, CEC-DCDD, RESNA, TASJ, LSSAAC
- http://www.asha.org/NJC/

Purposes of the NJC Literature Review

- Describe current communication intervention research using solid research standards
- Describe the state of science in communication interventions applied to persons with severe disabilities
- Inform specific future research needs
- Explore Diversity of Communication Competence
- Explore research on ways to enhance communication

Methods

General

- Peer-reviewed journals in English 1987-2007
- Communication intervention studies
- Severe disabilities
- Limited to experimental, quasi-experimental, and single-subject designs
- Descriptive analyses

Four-Step Search Process

1. 13 electronic data bases
2. 47 expanded search items
3. 269 potentially relevant articles
4. Narrow pool to relevant data baseaccording to three inclusion criteria

Data Collection

Research Evaluation Instrument

NJC Evidence-based Practices Data Entry Instrument, 2008 Converted tool into an electronic coding form and activated online using a web-based survey platform -www.zoomerang.com

NJC members read and independently coded 5 articles - discussed inclusion criteria ratings

Randomly selected 50 articles & assigned 7-8 articles to 2 raters; compared and discussed ratings & resolved differences

Modified coding form accordingly

Prior to finalizing coding form, primary authors read 6 articles independently; discussed and resolved coding differences; clarified the coding form.

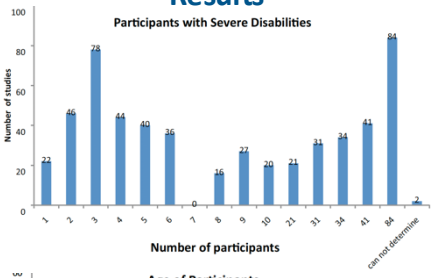
Inclusion Criteria

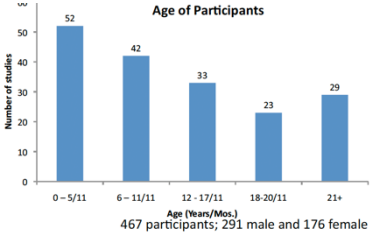
- Communication intervention studies
- Intervention addressed ≥ 1 communication performance area
- Severe disabilities
  - Added criteria to definition of severe disabilities to include IQ, CA compared to receptive/expressive language age
  - Erred on side of inclusion
- 117 of the original 269 met these criteria

Inter-rater Agreement

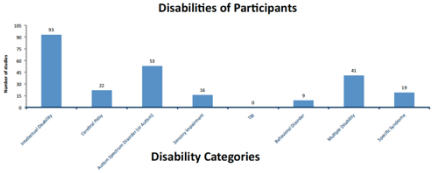
1. Inclusion Criteria:
   Article describes in intervention - 97% ≥ 1 person with severe disabilities - 94%Rx addressed ≥ area of communication performance - 84%
2. Content Review - remaining 32 items: Paired reviews/ratings over 36 randomly chosen studies
3. Only items rated 75% or better are reported

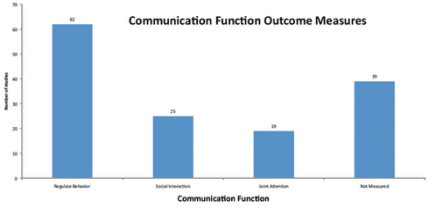
Results

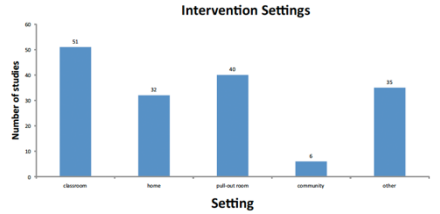


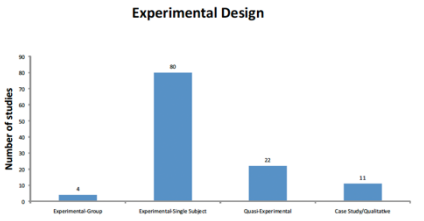


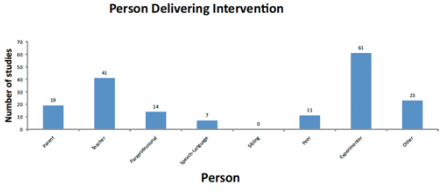
467 participants; 291 male and 176 female











Conclusions

What can We learn from NJC's work?

- **Internal and external validity in reviewed studies was poor;**
- **Procedural fidelity difficult to assess/replicate; and**
- **Research rigor varied.** **However…**

95% reported immediate and positive effects! So…

WE work with people who have severe disabilities and who may not communicate in typical ways.

WE can better understand communication challenges and utilize resources from the NJC to facilitate communication strategies within intervention teams.