









Intervention Idea: Provide Life Experiences

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Individuals with disabilities do not have the same kinds or amounts of life experiences as speaking, able-bodied children. There may be big gaps in their understanding of what we consider the simplest things. Whenever introducing a Minspeak® icon, include “life experiences” as part of the learning adventure.

- Collect objects, like props, for each of the main icons on the person’s Minspeak® display. These object props don’t have to be exactly the same, but should represent a similar idea. For example, your Minspeak® program might include these four icons: , , , . To build life experiences around these icons, do some of these simple, family-oriented activities:
 -  Play a variety of games that involves dice, like Yahtzee®. Do all the normal things you do in a game, remembering to talk about what you are doing. Then play games that do not involve dice in order to generalize the idea of all types of games.
 -  Do an art project and make masks that you and the individual using Minspeak® can wear. Start with yellow masks and then venture into other kinds of masks. Make masks that show different kinds of emotions.
 -  Collect some cookie cutters and, if possible, find ones that are similar in geometric shapes to the ones shown in the icon. Make cookies for a special occasion.
 -  Get a pot from the kitchen and a kitchen thermometer. Put water in the pot and take the temperature. Then add ice cubes, stir, and take the temperature again.
- As you do these everyday, hands-on activities, find the icon on the Minspeak® display that matches or is similar to the object you are using. Compare and contrast the icon with the real object. Discover together the words that are coded with that icon.
- Find opportunities in your day to point out the parallels between things you find in the everyday world and things that are represented on the person’s Minspeak® display.