

TRANSCRIPT: Introduction to intensive interaction

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Intensive interaction is a process by which young people with profound communication difficulties are able to begin to realise that their movements, their sounds, their actions actually convey meaning to others.

Intensive interaction is based very strongly on relationships and that person has to have a very good relationship and understanding of that other young person.

The adult starts by copying the actions, the movements, the sounds of the young person. She listens very carefully to the tempo and to the emotions that the youngster is conveying and that enables them to realise that the adult has empathy with them.

We then may find that the adult leaves a gap, after a while, and the child will turn to the adult, and say, 'Come on, it's your turn now, you've got to join my game', and by doing that the youngster is realising that their actions have actually conveyed meaning, and she is beginning to control that environment.

Our students very frequently come from a background where, unfortunately, they've learnt that things are done to them, and this is their first opportunity for them to realise that they can actually control their environment, and when they realise that they can, I think, they get immense pleasure from that.