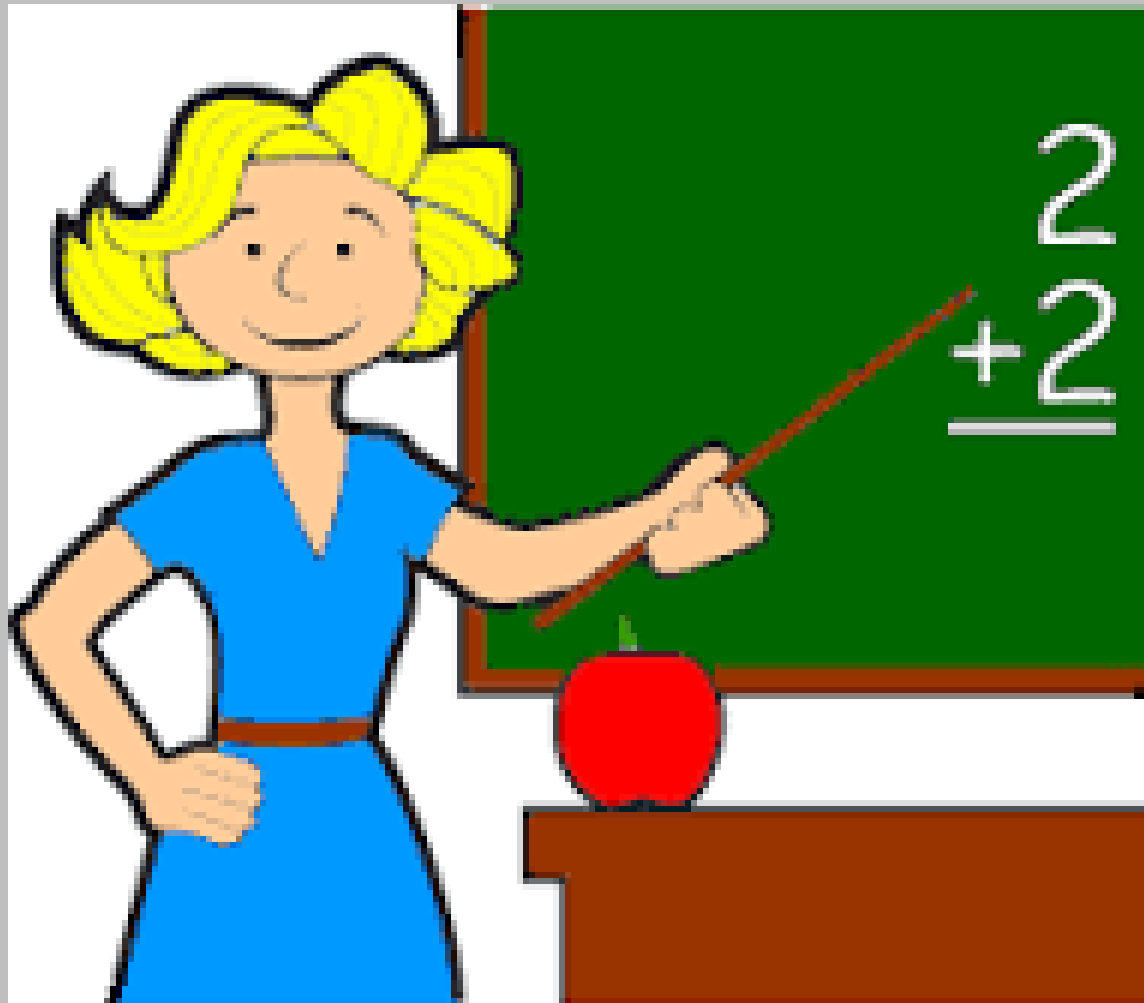




Give Them Something to Talk About!

Perspectives on Rett Syndrome:
What the Girls Teach Us

Traditional View of Teaching



Shift the Paradigm: What can I learn from them?

- 🔗 Dynamic Assessment – not static
- 🔗 Watch for what they are already doing
- 🔗 Build on what you observe
- 🔗 Give plenty of time for responses or there will be nothing to observe
- 🔗 What is their “best yes”
- 🔗 Their eyes are their pointer



Top Ten Lessons

(And I'm still learning!)





#10
**Be a Meaning
Maker**

Making Meaning....

A.K.A. Assume Competence

🔗 Read those eyes

🔗 Interpret their intentions – give meaning

🔗 Don't talk baby talk or assume baby ideas

🔗 Interpret feelings and interests

🔗 Remember to wait!!!

🔗 Assume they understand – access weak

A meme featuring Yoda from Star Wars. He is shown from the chest up, looking directly at the camera with a serious expression. His green skin and large ears are clearly visible. He is holding a small object in his right hand. The background is dark and out of focus.

**RETT SYNDROME I
HAVE
STUPID I AM
NOT**



#9 Watch Those Eyes

Don't turn away really!!

Those eyes....

- 🔗 The apraxia affects timing
- 🔗 Give them time and be ever watchful
- 🔗 Your focused presence is a gift to them and you
- 🔗 Their eyes are their “pointer finger” respond as such
- 🔗 Get in their shoes and interpret

... of the book in the top rectangle. Record details ...
... below. Then, use the information to write a summary on a se...

Main Idea

Detail

Detail

Detail

Detail

Detail

Additional Details

Additional Details

Additional Details

Additional Details

#8

Get to their thinking level ...

Better Assume Competence

Thinking & Communication

- ❏ Communication NOT verbal language is the key
- ❏ “Show me_____” is not communication
- ❏ Pointing will improve pointing
- ❏ We want to improve thinking
- ❏ We want to build communication skills
- ❏ Keep expectations high and interesting – adapt the output

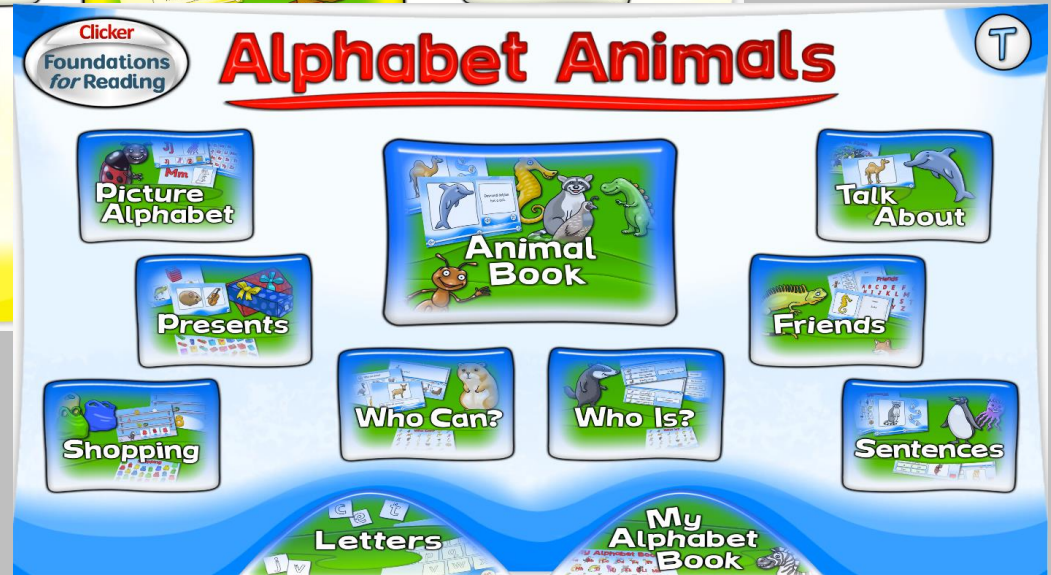


**Integrating
AT and AAC is
Essential**

Integrate vs. Use

- ❏ No “point” or “show me with your eyes”
- ❏ AAC integrated across all arenas
- ❏ Need high and low tech
- ❏ Think like the kiddo – what would they want to say
- ❏ AT expression or support of curriculum – NOT the curriculum

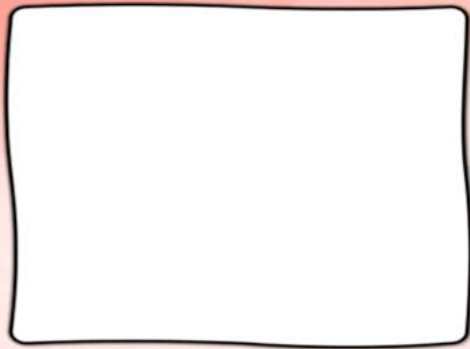
Phonemic Awareness



Foundations for Reading Clicker



Sound Sequencing





#6
**There is no
prerequisite for
an Eye-Gaze
Device**

Low Tech Prerequisite Trap(:

- ❌ Often the path to high tech is through proving low tech
- ❌ Often low tech's access is such a barrier – it fails
- ❌ Girl is seen as unable to communicate
- ❌ Don't take "no" for an answer!!!
- ❌ THERE ARE NO PRE-REQUISITES!

Eye-Gaze

- ✂ It is not about right/wrong
- ✂ Put academics on it and it will fail
- ✂ Learn to chit-chat
- ✂ Girls need a smart communication partner
- ✂ Set it up to allow for real communication
- ✂ Model, Model, Model, Imitate



#5
**I need peers
in my life...**
Not just adults

Classroom Setting

- Peers get the device – they model
- Peers read her eyes
- Peers are NOT authority figures
- Peers are fun and engaging
- Result – more communication, interaction and engagement
- Peers use 4-grid!



#4 Everyone Writes

Story Co-Construction,
Narratives and ABC
Writing

Writing, really????

🔗 If I can write, I can say anything

🔗 Wonder if it's not on my talker?

🔗 If I want to send an email?

🔗 I want to be like everyone else

🔗 We have to figure out their pencil

🔗 Need access to the alphabet

Writing is Developmental

✎ Begins with scribbling

✎ aaaaabbbbbbccc

✎ Then letters with some patterns

✎ J ja jac jack jacki jackie

✎ Then words

✎ Then sentences

#3

Everyone
Reads...
You can't learn
what you
aren't taught



Reading

- Q Where would we be without it
- Q Needless barriers are put up to exclude the girls
- Q Evens the playing field in the classroom
- Q Great independent leisure activity
- Q Builds communication/writing

Taylor Swift Book

Taylor Swift



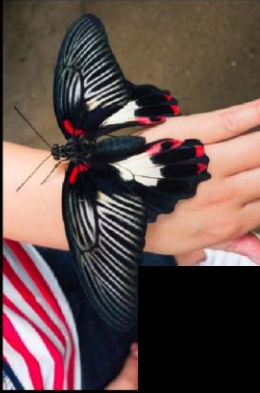
I like her shoes.



I like her shoes.

Hello Butterfly

big



small

Hello, big butterfly.



Hello, big butterfly.

#2

Girls need age appropriate Communication

Figure out what's cool!



Communication that's fun!

🔗 Not baby talk

🔗 Not just "I want....."

🔗 Comments! Good ones!

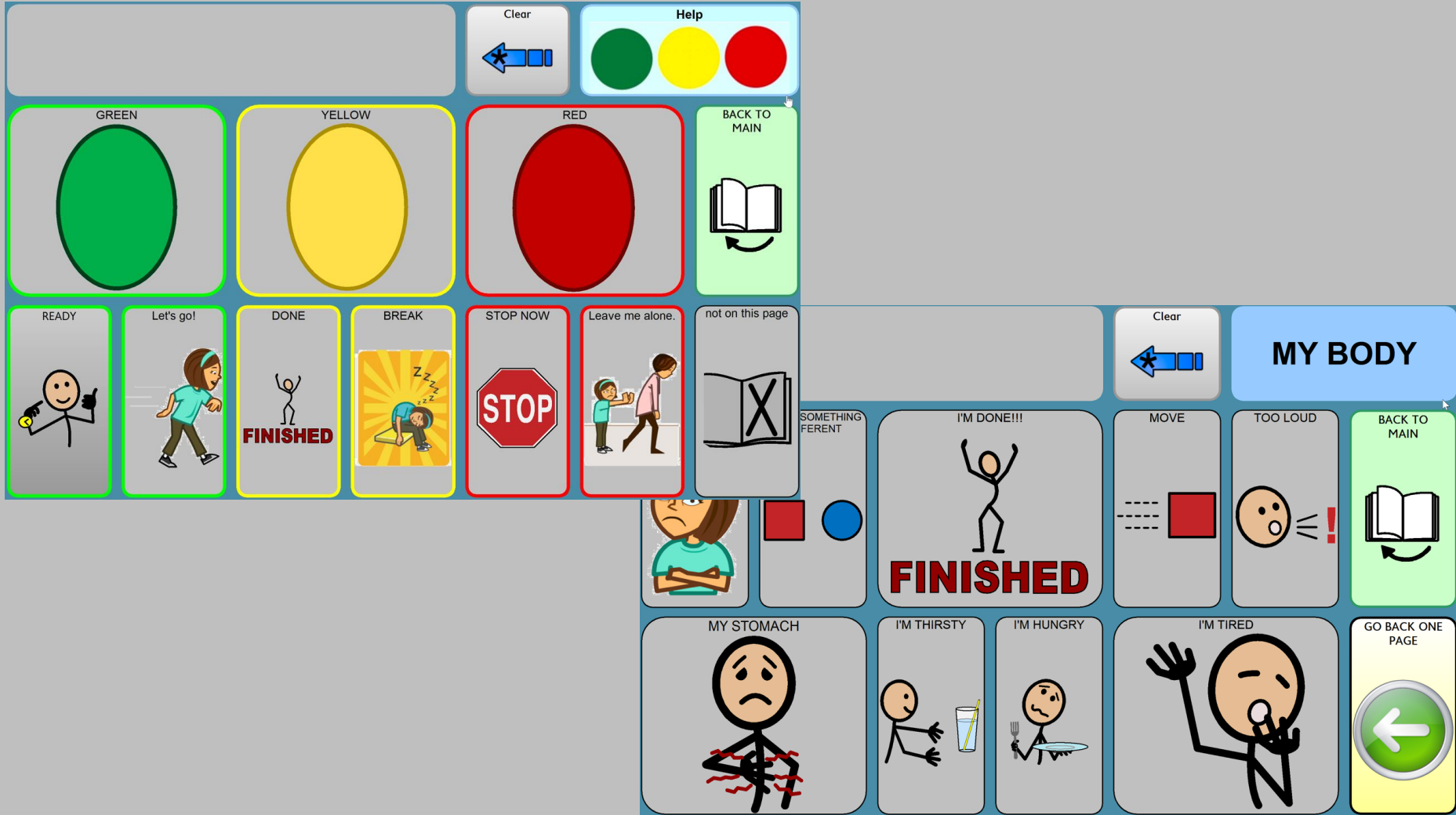
🔗 Greetings

🔗 Problem solving behavior replacements

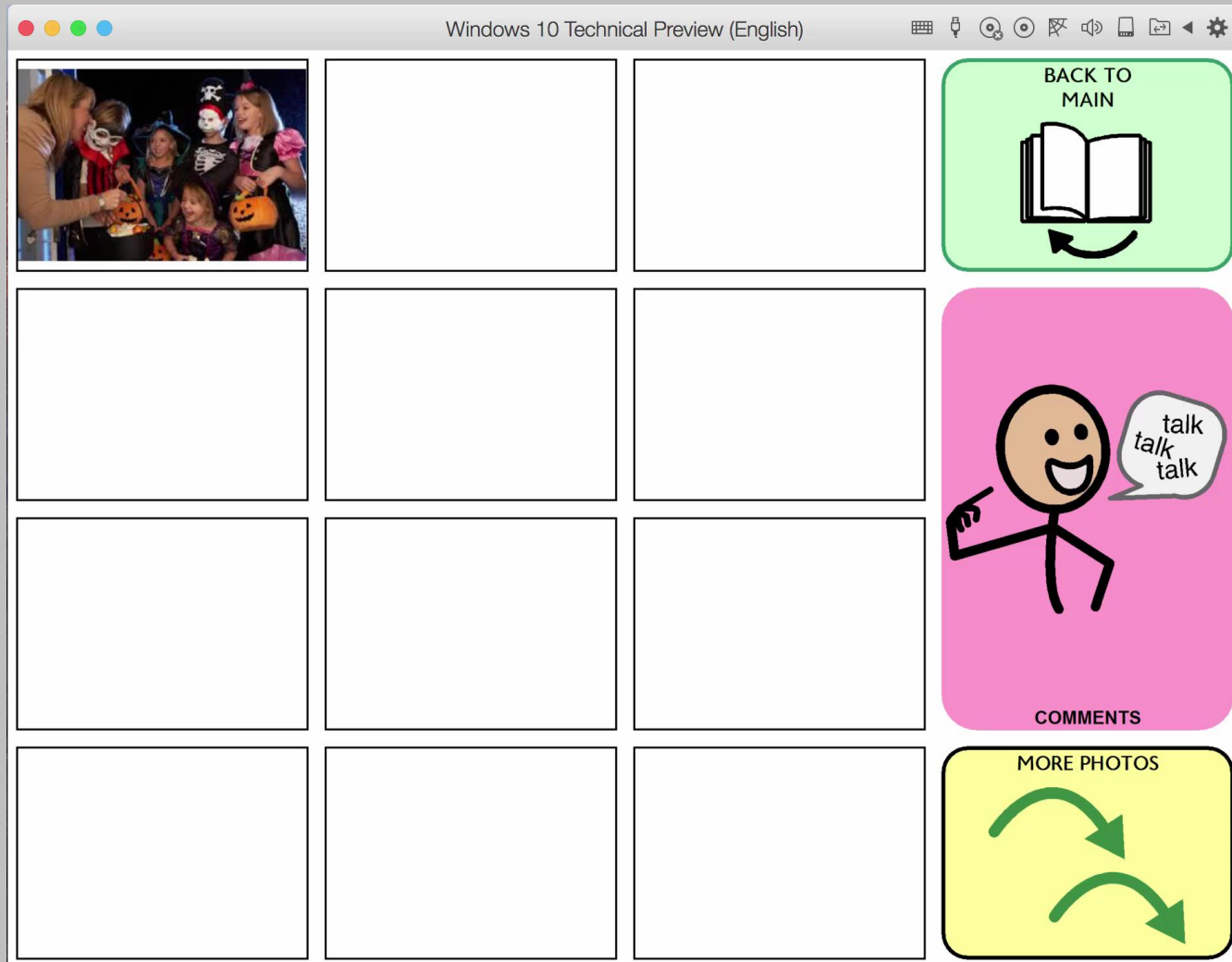
🔗 Green, Yellow, Red

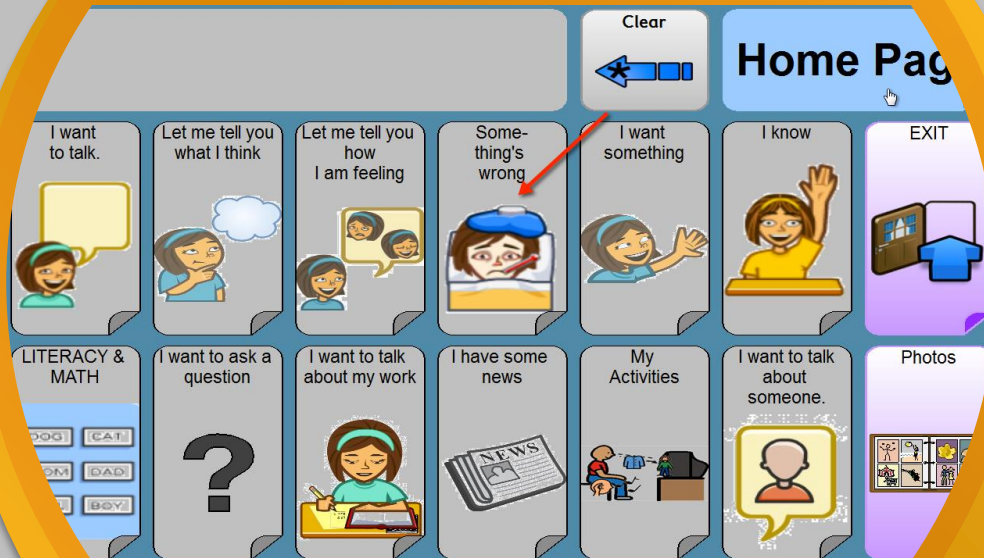
🔗 Photos, Stories, Homework

Green, Yellow, Red



Talking Photo Album





#1
**Saying what I
want to say,
When I want to
say it!**

Trust and Relationship

🔗 At the basis of EVERYTHING!!!!

🔗 I assume competence

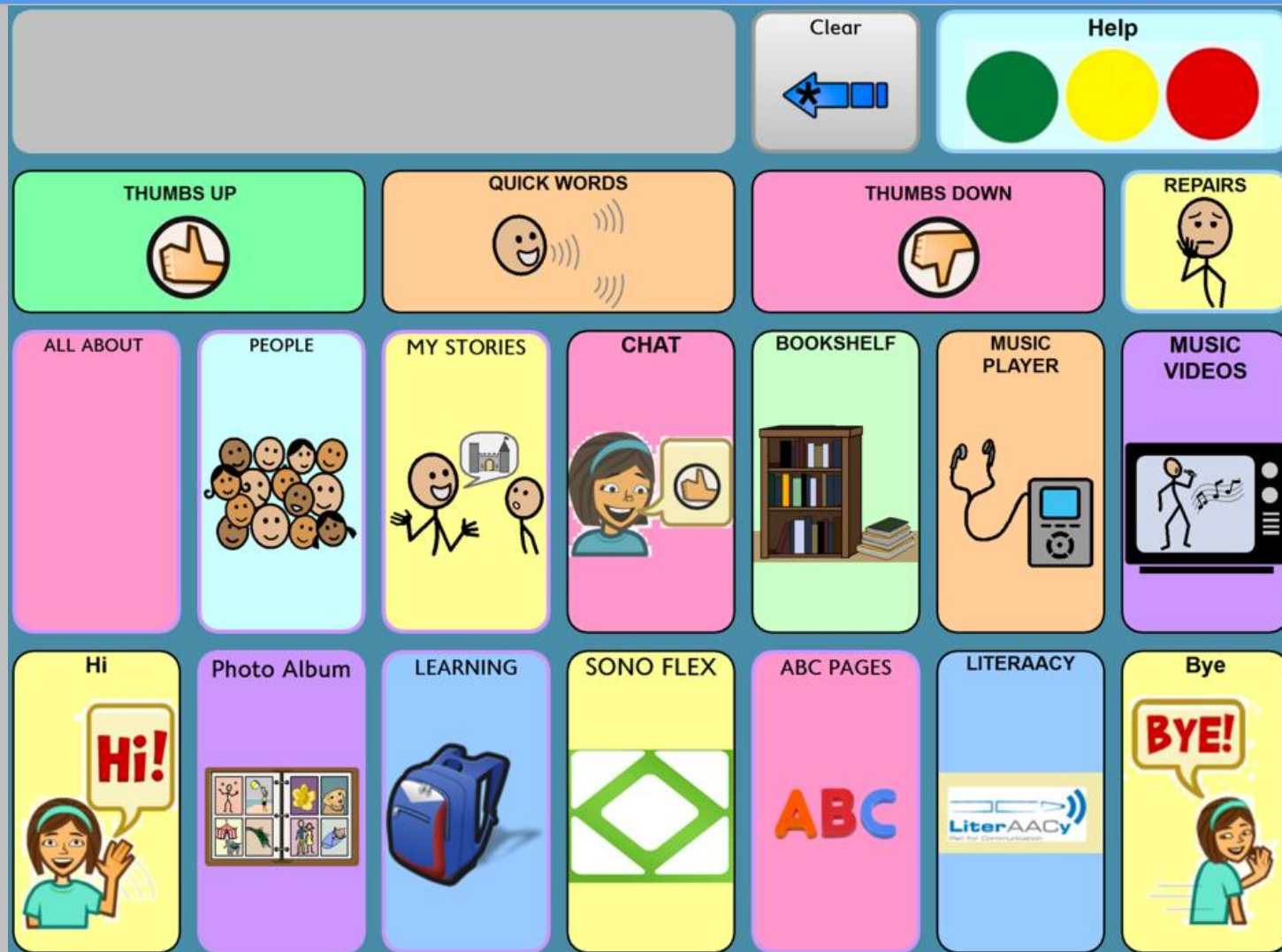
🔗 If I am confused – I take the blame

🔗 They can trust I will wait

🔗 They can trust I will work to figure it out

🔗 They can trust I will listen!

The Girls Need Everything



What We've Learned

🔗 Assume competence!

🔗 Give them more for communication - not less

🔗 Read all communications and be a meaning maker

🔗 Relationship is key

🔗 Give them something worthwhile to learn

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