

# High-5 and GiveMe-20

## *Start-up Communication using CORE LANGUAGE*

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### **GiveMe-20**

This is the recommended set of core vocabulary for development of communication skills for non-verbal students. Depending on the level of communication delay, this core vocabulary may be used as a jump-off point for communication and language development, or it may be the primary method of communication for long-term application.

**GiveMe-20 sample core word set:**      **Yes, No, Thanks, More, Help, You, I, Do, There, Want, Go, Me, Here, Stop, Hi, Bye, Wow, Bad, Finished, Good.**

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### **High-5**

This is a reduced set of core vocabulary using five key words that are used in the same fashion throughout the day to develop interactive communication in all settings. This simplified core vocabulary is for students that are significantly impaired in language and communication and who may even be further encumbered by physical disabilities. Therefore, for these students, the use of 20 core words of the Give Me 20 may be too much to interpret visually and/or too much to access physically.

**Hi-5 sample core word set:**      **Hi, More, I like that, Yes, No.**

NOTE: The **GiveMe-20** and **High-5** word sets are not set in stone but samples of sets that work within a variety of settings. If one feels that other symbols or words have greater application for a particular student, then these can replace items in the core vocabulary set.

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## Principles in the use of CORE WORD SETS:

- **START SMALL:** The words selected can be used as a general response to answer a large number of questions or to indicate a response on a wide variety of topic. Keeping the vocabulary small and consistent allows an enormous amount of practice with those words. This ultimately enables the students to get the training they need to integrate these words into their natural repertoire of responses.
- **APPROPRIATE QUESTIONS:** Teachers and therapists must remember to phrase questions or comments that can be responded to the vocabulary set available to the student. For example, if a student is using only the Hi-5 word set above, one should not ask, "How are you feeling today?" as there will be no appropriate response available to the student. Instead, one may ask, "Do you feel good today?"
- **PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE:** Providing increased opportunities for interaction will foster language and communication development as well as offer the reinforcement required to acquire skills and concepts. In addition, providing high-repetition practice will effectively train physically impaired students on the motor skills needed to access these words in their communication devices.
- **KEEP IT REAL:** All of these practice sessions should occur in real time, making it more meaningful for the students.
- **ONE AT A TIME:** The introduction of any of the vocabulary needs to be taught one word at a time, in isolation, and should be supported by practice prior to being put onto a communication board. It is recommended that at the beginning of a school year, the **core words** should be displayed in the classroom, taught one by one, and then added to communication boards and devices. Within a few weeks, capable students will potentially be interacting with peers and staff using these core words.
- **MOVING UP:** After initiation by students of Core words and consistent use and application is evidenced, the teachers and therapists should follow through by increasing the complexity of the interactions, adding vocabulary to the word set, and moving through the next steps in language and communication development.

- ***CORE IS KEY:*** Use of **core words** with communication-impaired students will provide the foundation skills needed for increased language and communication development.