

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Isn't it too late to do communication remediation with young adults?

No. Research has shown that many individuals with significant disabilities continue to develop their communication and language skills throughout their young adult years, and make measurable gains when provided with appropriate communication services. For more information (including references to research), please scroll to the similar question at www.asha.org/NJC/faqs-eligibility.htm.

2. Is this Program for my son/daughter?

This is something for your child/family to decide. However, the program is being deliberately developed to serve the practical communication remediation needs of a wide range of learners. The program would be part-time, with 3-hour sessions in the morning or afternoon. Learners would have some choice in the number of weekly sessions (2, 3, 4 or 5) depending on their remediation goals and other factors. Learners would continue to participate in their regular activities (e.g. work, day program or school).

3. Will my non-verbal child learn to read?

Some think that non-verbal persons cannot learn to read. This is often not the case (e.g. see Carly Fleischmann's touching story at <http://abcnews.go.com/Health/story?id=4311223&page=1>). CRCL believes that most people can learn to read regardless of their communication or speech impairment. CRCL is also intended for those that use augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) systems and who would like to improve their literacy skills.

4. Will the Program help my son/daughter in their transition from high school?

We expect that the program will be of interest to all those transitioning from high school, regardless of their ambitions or objectives - whether work, participation in a day program or post-secondary education. This includes those who would like to attend a post-secondary program but require communication remediation to reach the admission standard, those waiting for admission, and current or former students.

5. Will the program meet the unique needs of each participant?

It should, since the program will be largely person-centered. The learner's remediation goals would drive the curriculum and set the lesson plans. At the onset, the learner's unique abilities would be carefully assessed, and his/her unique communication remediation goals (language, literacy & numeracy) would be established considering the various settings in which he/she participates or may participate in future. As the program unfolds, teaching techniques would be regularly adjusted following ongoing skill assessments and as the learner improves his/her communication skills.

6. How will we know that a participant is in fact learning?

CRCL is committed to effectiveness, cost-effectiveness and transparency. Built-in accountability will be guaranteed by reporting the result of the ongoing skill assessments to those concerned. The data will prove whether the learner is making progress or not, helping the instructor to quickly adjust the teaching techniques being used - or to conclude that further communication remediation is no longer required.

7. What will be the size of a 'class'? How much 1-on-1 intensive remediation will occur?

There would be small groups of four learners to two instructors. During each 3-hour session, on 45 minute rotations, three learners would spend time as a group with one instructor, while a fourth learner would be with the other instructor for intensive remediation instruction. The four learners in each group

would have to be relatively homogeneous or compatible (in terms of their abilities and remediation goals). This would allow the group instructor to implement effective group lessons plans.

8. What techniques will be used to help each participant acquire the skills that they lack?

The program would use a variety of proven tools and techniques, including but not limited to Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) techniques. *See the CRCL document 'About ABA' for additional information.*

9. Who will be the instructors?

A Senior Instructor would be responsible for the programming and would direct and supervise junior instructors. Instructors will be trained in ABA. A Speech and Language Pathologist will provide services as required.

10. When will the program start?

We don't know yet. CRCL's current plan provides for the program to start by January 1, 2011.

11. Where will the sessions take place?

We don't know yet. The program would be delivered by (or in partnership with) an existing service provider in Ottawa. To be clear, CRCL's focus is not academic but is "for community living". This means balanced instruction that is both centre-based and community-based (i.e. 'community based instruction' - CBI). Where possible, learners would practice skills in the actual community settings that apply to them (or may apply in future).

12. You say that the program will be affordable - how much will it cost?

The cost to learners is not yet known. However, CRCL is committed to fairness and to helping remove barriers to social inclusion. Thus, the program is being planned to be effective, available to a wide range of learners and therefore as affordable as possible. Since ABA or similar programs are inherently costly (given the low learner to instructor ratio), this explains the chosen fee-for-service program model (i.e. part-time; three-learner groups). The program would be consistent, in whole or in part, with the supports funded by MCSS such that clients could tap into available self-directed funding (including Passport and SSAH). Also, CRCL will actively seek government funding (e.g. from the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities - MTCU).

13. Does the Ontario government support this initiative?

CRCL will advocate with the government to obtain its active support. CRCL's vision is directly aligned with the government's stated objective to have a system in which people can have more choice and control over their lives, and CRCL is committed to helping Ontario break down barriers to accessibility. To achieve its objectives, CRCL proposes to work collaboratively with the Province (including MCSS, MoHLTC & MTCU), community stakeholders and families. Referring to the *Services and Supports to Promote the Social Inclusion of Persons with Developmental Disabilities Act, 2008*, and to the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, CRCL fully supports the government's intention to build a system of services and supports that is fair and flexible such that people's needs are addressed.

14. Who are the people behind the CRCL initiative?

CRCL is a grassroots initiative that started in Ottawa in 2009. CRCL is led by a Steering Committee, the members of which are mostly parents of children who require communication remediation.

15. How do I obtain additional information concerning this initiative?

To obtain additional information, or if you wish to help in the development of this initiative, please write to: icommunicate@rogers.com.