

Environmental Strategies That Improve Social Participation at Aphasia Camp

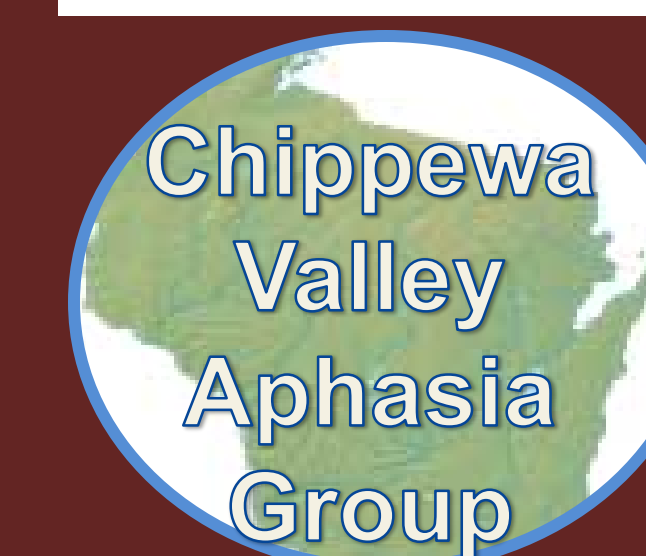
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Environment is Central to Camp



Mission & Objectives

- The mission of the Aphasia Camp is to offer people with aphasia and their significant others activities and resources to reduce social isolation and facilitate communication success.
- Provide everyday resources, opportunities to try or resume life activities, and promote sense of well-being



Setting

- Rustic YMCA camp with scenic lakeside lodge
- Accessible lodging and event sites
- Miles away from the homes of most campers
- Surrounded by peers and supportive staff who know about aphasia



Who's involved

- Individuals with aphasia: 30s-70s, mild-severe, all types
- Partners: spouses, children, siblings
- Volunteers: community professionals (OT, PT), CSD students
- Instructors: community professionals and recreation enthusiasts

WHO-ICF Environmental Access Factors

Aphasia Friendly Documents

Facilitate camper choice making
Facilitate independence

Accessible Technology

Supported by trained staff
Adapted bikes, golf, fishing

Modifications increase access

Golf carts reduce fatigue
Physical modifications for activity
Language modifications for activities

Location & Setting

Serene, calming, escape
Away from their homes
Surrounded by peers

Staff Training

To facilitate communication
To facilitate participation
To make environment accessible

Shared Activities

Meals, sessions, events, campfires at the day's end, hikes & walks, conversations by the fireplace, conversations by the flagpole, boat rides

Environmental Factors Applied to Outcomes



Natural Environment & Human-Adaptations

Support & Relationships



Products & Technology

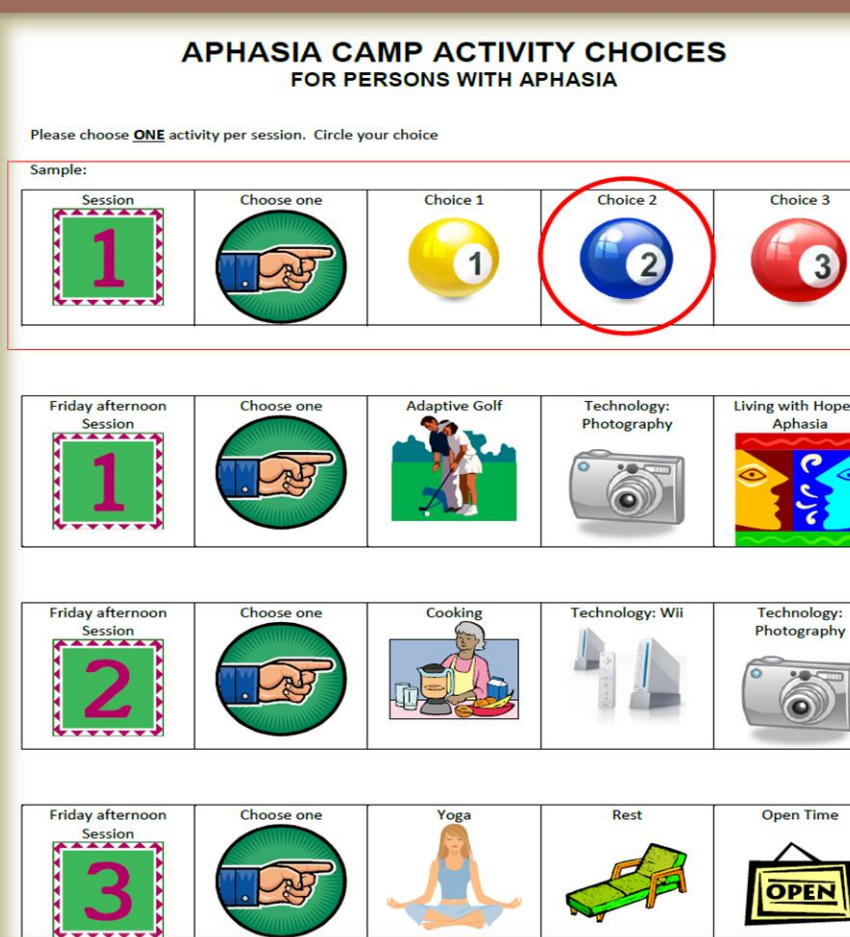
Services, Systems, & Policies:

Together, these factors create the infrastructure for an **aphasia friendly environment**.

This safe environment encourages choice-making, goal-directed actions, self-challenge, and participation.

Campers forget about aphasia for awhile.

Attitudes



Outcomes



Camp Outcomes: PWA -

All of it was fantastic

The people were very friendly and helpful.
Meeting the other campers and visiting with them.

It gave me a chance to try thing it wouldn't of tried before. In a non-threatening environment.

FUN! Tiring, but still fun.

Because I feel good and I'm getting better all the time and I can't talk about other people -- "help 'other people'"

People asked "where do you want to go": instead of just sitting here" Everything was just perfect.

Because of the camp and the group I belong to at home I think I am becoming more confident in relationships with other people.

I'm hoping to start a camp -- need I say more?



Camp Outcomes: Partners --

The experience increased my partner's enthusiasm for life and willingness to try things he's been hesitant to do.
Hearing stories from others. Learning from others. Inspired by how others have handled recovery and moved on with their new lives.

Absolutely, we have been coming for 3 years. This year we had a big breakthrough - you may not ever get an opportunity have one IF you don't take risk and go to something like this.

Wonderful, positive experiences. In a supportive environment. This is our second year and returning was even more productive and enjoyable to get to know people that I did not get a chance to get know last year. Renew friendships and build on them.

He'd have dragged me if I hadn't been willing -- it's the highlight of his year

Such sincere people! Always caring, helpful - great. The way they take the time to talk with everyone. They truly listen! I received new ideas about how to help my husband learn to read. I learned about Facebook and how to access info about learning programs to help with aphasia.

It has allowed us to progress in our lives. There is life outside of aphasia and this supports people as they try to find their new life and passions. Starting to relax and let go of what was lost and develop skills and mindset to start redirecting my life and mindsets to a more productive future.

It buoys Sandy's spirit to see the progress others are making opens her mind to possibilities. Then this year ART class - an epiphany for us.

It helps reinforce some of the practices I forget about. It also has a respite effect for me and I feel refreshed and more patient. It is also very helpful to talk with others that face many of the same challenges.



Community Outcomes: PWA -

Talking about other people - I feel the same. I know that they can get better. I can tell them. I mow my own lawn. Lawn work. Now I can use my razor. Puzzles and games with granddaughter.

Taught me to accept my aphasia and not hide from it. I am how I am and people will have to accept it.

Made me wan to write my book, Moya Moya, more than before.

Big time - more conversations, realize how to conquer difficulties in variety ways.

Try to have more communication with others I feel more motivated to get out and do more. Improves attitude. Encourages conversation.

I'm doing things I wouldn't try before I did them here. I now appreciate how fortunate I am compared to others.

One couple purchased art supplies on their trip home from camp.

A camper with aphasia demonstrated use of a cross-bow to fellow campers.