

Communication Repair Strategies

What is a communication breakdown?

Communication breakdowns occur whenever the speaker is not understood by the listener. Everyone experiences communication breakdowns at some point. Many variables can contribute to communication breakdowns.

Communication repair strategies can:

- Help individuals who have difficulty being understood in situations because of unclear speech
- Increase successful communication experiences and decrease frustration
- Improve social participation

Speaker Strategies

- Make sure your listener is ready! A listener may be ready when they are not talking to anyone else and looking at you. You may tell your listener you have something to say.
- Repeat your message – say your message again using a slower rate and a louder voice
- Repeat your message and highlight key sounds – this may be the end of the words you have said
- Revise your message – use different words that have the same meaning or try shorter sentences
- Add more information with your hands or face.
- Add visual information like showing or pointing, or drawing a picture
- Try your acting skills! You can use gestures or act it out
- Write a word or spell it out
- Remember you can always tell people what you want them to know (or do) or what might help (e.g. “It’s helpful if you tell me to repeat”)

There may be other strategies or techniques that could work for you. Ask your SLP for more ideas!