Aphasia Access Leadership Summit, March 16-18, 2017, Share and Care Presentation

Safety in Knowledge: Personal Safety Training for People with Aphasia

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INTRODUCTION
- Participation, independence, and autonomy are critical to living successfully with aphasia (Brown et al., 2012).
- Achieving these goals can be challenging (Elman, Ogar, & Elman, 2000), and feeling unsafe can be an obstacle to participation in community activities.
- People with disabilities become victims of nonfatal violent crimes at more than twice the age-adjusted rate of other adults (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2015).
- For some members of CSUEB’s Aphasia Treatment Program (ATP) and their families, fears of being victimized limit members’ independence.

OBJECTIVES
- Explore the personal safety concerns of CSUEB’s ATP members
- Collaborate with campus police to provide personal safety education using aphasia-friendly materials and supportive communication techniques
- Evaluate ATP members’ feedback of personal safety program success

METHODS
- Conducted web-based search and phone interviews to identify personal safety training for stroke survivors
- Identified an expert to create training: CSUEB chief of police
- Adapted campus personal safety presentation to needs & interests of ATP members using best practices
- Trained the chief in supported communication techniques
- Administered a 5-question pre-program survey to ATP members to understand their personal safety concerns and interests
- Hosted a presentation by the chief & an emergency dispatcher to 29 ATP members
- Created aphasia-friendly handout summarizing the presentation
- Gathered client feedback on training via 11-question survey

Topics included: ID of suspects, parking lot safety, crime trends, robberies and assaults, personal safety alarms, and calling 911.

OUTCOME MEASURES
Evaluated ATP members’ concerns about and knowledge of personal safety and gathered their feedback about the program using:
- A 5-question pre-program survey
- An 11-question post-program survey

RESULTS
Pre-presentation survey results from 27 respondents:
- 12 ATP members (44%) had felt fearful for their safety since their stroke “a few times” or “often.”
- 19 members (70%) expressed a high interest (8-10 rating) in wanting to learn more about personal safety and self-defense.

Post-presentation survey results from 29 respondents, using a 10-point scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Percent</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How important do you consider the topic of personal safety?</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How well were you able to understand the information presented today?</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall, how valuable did you find the personal safety information?</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>84%</td>
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<td>Would you recommend this training to other people with aphasia?</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>93%</td>
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<tr>
<td>How much did you learn in the personal safety presentation?</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>68%</td>
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62% recommended all topics be kept in program; 911 calls (34.5%) and personal safety alarms (27.6%) received highest interest markings across the topics areas.

CONCLUSIONS
- Despite the fact that individuals with aphasia are more likely to be victims of crime than their non-disabled peers, programs to educate this population about personal safety skills are rare.
- Community partners can conduct effective outreach with this vulnerable population when trained using evidence-based practices for supported communication.
- Participants found the presentation valuable and many expressed that they would like to participate in additional training. Accessing 911 calls was a high concern.
- People with aphasia may benefit from safety education tailored to their needs.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS
- Create a pilot project self-defense class for people with aphasia.
- Expand training of community partners to conduct effective outreach to people with aphasia.
- Explore methods to help people with aphasia access 911 calls on landlines and cell phones.

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