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### Effective communication skills are essential for better quality of life

Communication is more than just being able to verbally pronounce words and sentences. We communicate to participate in a conversation, asking and answering questions and commenting. We also communicate to regulate the behavior of others and to interact socially. But to achieve these purposes effectively we need to be competent across multiple areas. Linguistically, we need to know what words to say and how to organize them into grammatically correct sentences so our communication partners understand us and perceive us as a competent communicator. Socially, we need to know when it is our turn to speak and how to introduce a topic, maintain it and redirect it if we want to talk about something else. We need to be able to share our stories and know how to effectively end a conversation. Strategically, we need to know when someone does not understand us and we may need to clarify or add more information. We need to be effective, multi-modal communicators across our day and use speech and gestures, as well as our phone and written technology to communicate our messages. Our lives are adversely affected when we cannot do these things competently. To maintain, regain and/or achieve a better quality of life, we need to determine what is preventing us from being an effective communicator and what we can do to make things better.

### Biography

Sandra M Grether is a Speech-Language Pathologist III at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center in the Division of Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics and Adjunct Associate Professor at the University of Cincinnati, College of Allied Health Sciences. She is responsible for interdisciplinary student leadership training and research in prelinguistic communication with individuals with significant intellectual disabilities, impact of cognition on language in pediatric hearing loss and cognitive disabilities, childhood apraxia of speech and augmentative communication. She has been with CCHMC and UC for 17 years and a Practicing Clinician for 43 years.

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