

## U and Universal

### Communicating Effectively

Some people with intellectual or developmental disabilities have communication difficulties. When a person with a disability does have difficulty with communication, it may be helpful to keep the following in mind:

- \*Allow additional time to exchange information
  - \*Many people have stronger receptive skills than expressive skills
  - \*Some people have difficulty giving you an accurate picture of their feelings
  - \*If you are in a busy area with many distractions, consider moving to a quieter location
  - \*Use plain language and avoid jargon
  - \*Be specific, say “put your coat on” instead of “get ready”
  - \*rephrase and repeat questions if necessary
  - \*if the person is unable to talk, watch for body language
- Remember to be patient and always put yourself in their shoes!  
(Vanderbilt.edu)

Universal has over 800 employees and has offices in the following locations:

- Wilmington
- Newbern
- Wilson
- Raleigh
- Burlington
- Winston-Salem
- Forest City
- Morganton
- Asheville
- Corporate office (Lenoir NC)

Terry Bedford  
Assistant State Training Director  
Universal MH/DD/SAS  
www.umhs.net