

# INTRODUCTION

## Project Think and Link (TAL)

### The TAL Email Box: What is it?

- A simple email program designed for use by people with cognitive problems
- Certain features of the program can be customized

### What does the TAL Email Box look like? It has:

- A restricted number of partners
- One window each for reading email sent and composing a reply

### Where do you come in?

- Training is essential even though the TAL Email Box is a simplified program designed to make email accessible to people with cognitive problems.

This trainer's manual will help you understand exactly how to help your resident during the training process. There are three parts to the manual:

**Part 1: PREPARATION:** What to do before the resident starts the Email Training Program

**Part 2: TRAINING:** The Email Training Program

**Part 3: TRAINING/MONITORING:** What to do once the resident starts to use "live" email

# Part 1. PREPARATION

## What to do before the resident starts the Email Training Program

**Sessions 1 & 2: Schedule 1-2, 30-60 minute sessions with the resident to complete the following steps:**

Step 1.

- Explain to the resident what the email program is about and your role in working with the resident. It would be best to conduct the meeting next to the email computer, so that the resident can see what you're talking about.

Script:

“(Resident’s name), you and I will be working together to help you learn how to use email to communicate with other people who use email.”

“Email stands for electronic mail.”

“Messages are received and sent using a computer.”

“Before you get started with emailing, there are several things we need to do.”

“First, I will be asking you several questions, including questions about who you would like to email and questions about your background.”

“So, let’s get started.”

Step 2.

- Ask the resident who they would like to email. Use the “**Desired Email**” partners form to record their responses. Include the name, address, phone number, and relationship of the partner to the resident.

Step 3.

- Ask the resident to sign the **“Letter to Email Partners”** for each partner on the list. Fill out the top portion of the letter with the first name of the partner. Once Steps 2 & 3 are completed, give the **“Desired Email Partners”** list and signed **“Letter to Email Partners”** to the project coordinator. She will contact the partners.

Step 4.

- Ask the resident about background, daily activities, and past computer use, using the **“Background Information”** form.

### **Preparing for Session #3:**

- Spend some time practicing the **“Email Assessment”** on the computer on your own, until you feel like you can easily administer this to the resident.
- Refer to the **“Email Interface Screenshot”** to help you identify different items on the screen.

### **Session #3:**

- Schedule 30-60 minutes to conduct an assessment of the resident’s email skills. Use the **“Email Assessment”** sheet to record their performance.

What do I do when I press a key (e.g., F10) and nothing happens?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ If the program gets stuck, simply click on “Shutdown” and reclick on the area (e.g., Mouse practice, Typing practice, Editing practice) you were working in and try the step again.</li><li>▪ Let the tech group know if this becomes a frequent problem.</li></ul>

- Then ask the questions on the “**Email Knowledge Quiz**” sheet.  
Record what they say and refer to “**Email Knowledge Quiz key**” as a guide for checking the resident’s answers.

**Later, on your own:**

- Fill out the “**Email Goals**” sheet based on what you know about possible ways the resident could benefit from using email.

**TOTAL PREPARATION TIME: Approx. 3-6 hrs.**

## Part 2. TRAINING

### The Email Training Program

Now that you have completed Part I of the program, it is time to begin teaching the resident the email steps. The Email Training Program consists of five parts:

1. The **Email Teaching Principles: RAMP** (see below)
2. **Overview of Email Skills sheet**
3. **The Email Training Program: Overview of Lesson Plan** sheet, lesson plan sheets, and other printed materials in this notebook
4. The **Email Training Program Video**
5. The **Email Training Program on the Computer**

Take your time looking over these materials on your own before you begin training the resident. Begin with Step 1 below.

Step 1: Carefully read the **Email Teaching Principles: RAMP:**

**What are important teaching principles to remember?**

### **RAMP**

**Review/Assess:** (Assess) Can the resident do the email step(s) they learned from the last session? (Review) Regularly review previously learned steps

**Model:** Demonstrate how to do the step.

**Pactice:** Have the resident practice on their own until then can do the step independently.

### **RAMP TIPS**

- Make sure you can do the steps yourself before you work with your resident.
- If the resident makes an error, immediately demonstrate how to do the difficult step, then ask the resident to practice the step several times.
- Combine the step with previous steps and practice some more.
- Point out successes.
- Limit the extra conversations to the break or “distraction” periods. Being clear and consistent with directions will help your resident focus and be more successful.
- Record the resident’s performance on each assessment and practice trial. This will help you remember how long it takes your resident to learn each step.
- Do not teach more than 2-3 new steps per session.

Step 2: Review the **Overview of Email Skills** sheet to get an idea of what the resident will be taught.

Step 3: Review the **Overview of Lesson Plan** sheet and the lesson plan sheets for Steps 2.3-2.5 to orient yourself to the details of what you will do during a typical training session. There is a lot of information here, so take your time, re-read as much as you like, and follow along using the computer to help make sense of the information.

Step 4: Watch the **Email Training Program Video**. Follow along with the “instruction” sheets suggested by the trainer in the video.

Step 5: Continue to practice with the computer on your own to become more familiar with the program. Follow along with the lesson plan sheets as you go. Remember to review/practice the steps you will teach before each training session, so that you will be well prepared.

## Some commonly asked questions:

### What should I keep in mind when scheduling training sessions?

- The optimal training schedule for your resident is 3-4 training sessions per week for 30 minutes each session.
- If your time is limited, remember shorter, more frequent sessions are better than longer, but fewer sessions—So, if all you have is 15 minutes, go for it!
- You and your resident will need to work out your system for scheduling training appointments.

### Who are those people in the inbox pictures (e.g., McKay, Steve)? They aren't the resident's "real" email partners!

- True! These individuals are "pretend" partners while the resident learns the program.
- Once the resident completes all the steps through 8.1, s/he will switch to "live email" and should have at least 3-4 partners of his/her choice, including personal friends, family and/or volunteers.

### How does my resident advance in the program?

- Introduce each step in the order listed on the checklist.
- Do not advance to a new step until the previous step has been mastered.
- A step is considered mastered when:
  1. All steps are correct when rechecked during the Part 3 mini-breaks during a session (see lesson plan sheet).
  2. All steps are again correct during the Part 1: **Review/Assessment** at the beginning of the next training session.

### What is the "Big Picture" for training? Sometimes I get lost in the details.

- Understood! The steps have been sequenced in such a way that **new steps build on previous steps.**
- The Big Picture: What skills are necessary for the resident to learn email?
  - Orientation to the computer screen, mouse move and click, initiating and sending an email
  - Replying to/sending an email
  - Knowledge about incoming emails (e.g., date & subject line)
  - How to move the cursor using the keyboard arrows
  - Basic typing
  - Basic editing
  - Understanding the purpose of different email function buttons
  - Knowledge of purpose of email and basics of written communication
- The reason for training the steps one at a time is to make it easier for the resident to learn and remember what to do. Training too many new steps at once can be overwhelming!
- However, sometimes you will be able to "combine" steps, if the resident is doing very well in a particular skill area. Steps that could be combined are highlighted in blocks of color on the **Overview of Email Skills** sheet.

Step 6: Once you feel you understand the basics of how to do the training, you are now ready to begin training the resident to use the program, beginning with Skill 1.1. Refer to the **Email Assessment** you and the resident completed to help guide you in deciding which steps will need more or less practice.

**GOOD LUCK!!!** 😊

<b>Progress Notes</b>
Fill out the <b>Progress Notes</b> at the end of every training session. This is to help guide you in knowing where to start the next session.

<b>While the resident participates in the Email Training Program, what can I do to help the resident get set up with “live email”?</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Be sure to contact the Think-and-Link team before you begin training Step 7.1</li><li>▪ Consult with the project coordinator on the status of the email partners. Have they returned their “Letter to Email Partners” along with a photo of themselves?</li><li>▪ As the project coordinator collects all the Letters and photos, the partners will be added to the resident’s “live email” program, so that it’s ready to go once you’ve completed Step 8.1.</li></ul>

## Part 3: TRAINING/MONITORING

### What to do once the resident starts to use “live” email

You can switch to using “live email” when the resident:

- Demonstrates mastery of all the steps up through 8.1
- Has a sufficient number of email partners to correspond with

<b>What is my role as a trainer once the resident starts to use “live email”?</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ The resident will still need your support during the beginning stages of using “live email” (i.e., real email with their chosen partners).</li><li>▪ Specifically, you will train Steps 8.2-8.5 during the first few weeks of the resident using live email.</li><li>▪ These steps focus on basic communication skills, such as replying to <u>and</u> initiating writing emails, sharing information and asking questions of the email partners.</li><li>▪ You will continue to check-in with your resident and Mary Ellen on adding new partners to the email inbox after the resident starts using live email.</li><li>▪ Once Steps 8.2-8.5 are completed, you will continue to help the resident with email set up, and monitor their use of email, answer any of their questions, review any email steps that are difficult, etc.</li><li>▪ You will also reassess their email goals. Every three months, we will ask you to circle the level of success achieved for each goal area selected before the resident started the email training program and to generate any new goals and success levels that have developed. See the <b>Email Goal</b> sheet for directions.</li></ul>