

# Life as an Online Engager

Hi, I'm Nadia Clarke. I live in Halifax with my lovely family and my dog called Ted. I have Cerebral Palsy and I am deaf. I use a Tobii Dynovox to communicate and give me a voice. I have a small team of PA's who support me to live an interesting and fulfilled life. I am working with a company called Inclu Travel, which support people with disabilities to find accessible travel opportunities including accommodation and flights. I love to travel around the world!

I have enjoyed working at ATmentors for a long time. I have seen the service grow from a small team of 3, to a great team of 10. I currently work as an Online Engager. This is a new role for me, which I am really enjoying. This involves developing social media and the marketing content. I have been writing blogs for many years. I can remember being involved with the media even when I was only 4 years old. I have been interviewed by many people in the media and journalism industry. I love sharing stories about my life, and I also really enjoy sharing experiences and advocating for disability rights. I feel so proud when other people read and enjoy my blogs, and it makes writing them worthwhile. I also feel passionately about sharing my experiences of travelling independently as a young disabled lady. I want to raise awareness that anyone, no matter what their ability, can travel the world!

I am currently a mentor, and I am working with my mentee, who is an 11-year-old girl. I try to see her once a month. Before I see her, I complete a session plan, which helps me prepare what subject we can focus on, and how I can create fun and lively sessions. We have aims and targets that we work towards meeting in each of our mentor sessions. We play games and try to be highly creative often using pictures and photos to help engage our mentees. Other examples of activities I have done with my mentee are:

- Hide and Seek
- Christmas activities
- Art and Crafts
- Pampering
- Guess Who
- Role Play

I always encourage my mentees to choose what they would like to do in our sessions, and to have a voice about what they want their sessions to involve.



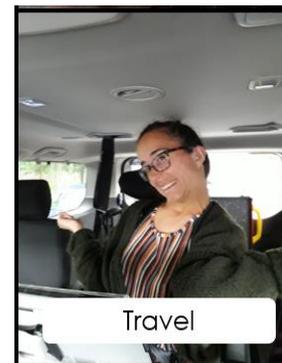
Session Planning

Sometimes our sessions are delivered remotely. I will change and adapt my mentor sessions to help engage the mentee. For example, I may do short, frequent sessions or we may pre-record videos and mentoring activities so that the mentee can do them in their own time. Sometimes my mentees may feel tired in the sessions, so it is important that I can adapt our sessions together and work flexibly. We can also use tools such as share screen, which allows the mentee to see the activities more easily.



Sometimes we travel to see the mentee face to face. I really enjoy doing face to face sessions. I find it more comfortable because it is easier for us to understand each other's body language and facial expressions.

We can deliver sessions at lots of different settings such as at the mentees home, school, college, workplace, care home and in the community. I used to travel to see a mentee for a session in ASDA café to help her to develop her confidence and social skills using AAC. We both enjoyed our sessions together. I have also met up with a mentee for a session in a restaurant – we enjoyed something to eat together.



The ATmentor team deliver training for communication partners at lots of different venues. It is important that I work with the ATtherapy team and share feedback with them such as the progress we are making. I really enjoy travelling to see my mentees and delivering training. Going out into the community promotes my mentees mental wellbeing – we have lots of fun together!

Following the session, I do a write up report about what we covered in our sessions. This ensures we can capture the progress towards the mentees goals and make notes of what the mentee wants to do next time. This helps me to prepare for future sessions which helps to build the mentees confidence, when they can see the progress they have made.



This report can then be shared with their speech therapists and other members of their team so they can see what improvements they have made.

As a team of mentors, we have regular workshops to develop mentoring and workplace skills.

We are a team of professional mentors, and lots of the team have formal mentoring qualifications. We work with the ATmentor manager to continue our professional development. For example, I have completed a level 2 in Mentoring, and a level 2 in Employability

As a team of mentors, we do team-building events and social activities when we can. I enjoy our workshops because it is good to meet people and to socialise.



Although a lot of the ATmentor team are busy with other commitments, we are all passionate about helping others who use AAC. We have been there and understand the joys and challenges of learning to use AAC.

As well as working for ATmentors, I am a Travel Ambassador for an inclusive travel company. Travel is my biggest passion.

In my spare time, I enjoy meeting new people. I enjoy walking with my dog Ted, and I really enjoy having quality family time.

I love being a mentor. I enjoy building a relationship with my mentees. I hope that I can improve my mentees confidence with using AAC, but also to promote their independence.

Please do follow ATmentors on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/AT-Mentors-1866103963500134> where I will be posting more blogs and vlogs.

If you have any more questions, please email [info@attherapy.co.uk](mailto:info@attherapy.co.uk)

Thanks for reading my Blog, I hope you have enjoyed it 😊

