Communication Bill of Rights

All people with a disability of any extent or severity have a basic right to affect, through communication, the conditions of their existence. All people have the following specific communication rights in their daily interactions. These rights are summarized from the Communication Bill of Rights put forth in 1992 by the National Joint Committee for the Communication Needs of Persons with Severe Disabilities.

Each person has the right to

• request desired objects, actions, events and people
• refuse undesired objects, actions, or events
• express personal preferences and feelings
• be offered choices and alternatives
• reject offered choices
• request and receive another person's attention and interaction
• ask for and receive information about changes in routine and environment
• receive intervention to improve communication skills
• receive a response to any communication, whether or not the responder can fulfill the request
• have access to AAC (augmentative and alternative communication) and other AT (assistive technology) services and devices at all times
• have AAC and other AT devices that function properly at all times
• be in environments that promote one's communication as a full partner with other people, including peers
• be spoken to with respect and courtesy
• be spoken to directly and not be spoken for or talked about in the third person while present
• have clear, meaningful and culturally and linguistically appropriate communications

How to Know if Communication Options are Working

Presented by, Lisa Altman
LASARD Project
February 9th, 2012
In Today’s Workgroup

- Communication 101
- A shared understanding: functional communication for all.
- How to select a functional system.
- Strategies for effectively assessing the communication system.
In this video...

- What are the ways that you observe the students communicating with each other?
- Is it functional?
- How is this interaction affected by the students’ ability to communicate with each other?
Communication and Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) and related disabilities

- Students with ASD and related disabilities display impairments in communication.
- Delays can range from mild impairments in pragmatics to significant impairments in expressive and receptive communication skills.
- A student’s deficits in communication skills DOES NOT mean that he or she does not have information to convey to others.
- EVERYBODY has the right to communicate.

Simpson & Myles, 2008 and Downing, 1999
“Communication occurs when one individual sends a message to another and that message is received and understood.” (Downing, 1999 p. 2).
Communication 101

A partner

Something to communicate about

A way to communicate
Expressive Communication

- Forms
- Functions

Receptive Communication

- Forms
- Functions
• Students can display deficits in expressive or receptive communication, or both.

• Communication skill building should focus on increasing the number of functional forms and functions that a student can use for expressive and receptive communication with a variety of partners.
I 40. Students have the opportunity to communicate in natural settings with more than one person (e.g., natural settings could be break time in class, hallway, bathroom, lunch, recess, etc.).

I 41. Students’ instructional documentation includes a plan for social inclusion through access to multiple settings to increase the opportunity to communicate with peers.
I 42 Students use a socially acceptable form of communication to request preferred items and events.

I 43. Students use a socially acceptable form of communication to reject unpreferred items and events.

I 44. Students **sustain an interaction** with staff or peers by using socially acceptable forms of communication.

I 45. Students use a socially acceptable form of communication to **comment**.

I 46. Students use socially acceptable forms of communication to **initiate** an interaction with staff or peers.

I 47. Students **terminate** an interaction with staff or peers by using socially acceptable forms of communication.

I 48. Students continue to use socially acceptable forms of communication when initial attempt is unsuccessful.
The LAQI Key Area of Communication

- **I 49. Staff** foster and sustain students’ communicative attempts by responding (a) consistently, (b) in ways consistent with the student’s communicative purpose or motivation, and (c) at the student’s communicative level.

- **I 50. Peers** foster and sustain students’ communicative attempts by responding (a) consistently, (b) in ways consistent with the student’s communicative purpose or motivation, and (c) at the student’s communicative level.
“An estimated one third to one half of all children with ASD do not use functional speech to communicate.” (Spencer, Petersen, and Gillam, 2008).
Evidence-Based Practices for Communication

- Functional Communication Training (FCT)
- Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC/VOCA)
- Visual Supports
- Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS)
- Low to High Tech Assistive Technology

http://autismmpdc.fpg.unc.edu/content/evidence-based-practices
Functional Communication can Affect

- Behavior
- Social interaction
- Relationships
- Participation
- Self-determination
- Independent living
- Employment
- Academic achievement
- Quality of life
- And much, much more…
Assessment
Four Major Assessment Principles:

- All people communicate
- Assessment should be a process
- Assessment should be functional
- Assessment should involve more than the person with a disability

(Beukelman & Mirenda, 1992 in Simpson & Myles, 2008)
The outcome of assessment should be the acquisition of information to inform future instruction, based on current progress. (Simpson & Myles, 2008)

Is the student:

- Gaining more functional forms?
- Gaining more functional functions?
- Communicating with more people?
- Communicating in more places?
- Making progress on other individualized skills (e.g., increasing social interactions with typical peers)
Types of Assessments

- Interviews with instructional team and others, including family members
- Structured sampling (e.g., playing with a preferred toy in front of the student and not offering it to him)
- Formal Assessments (e.g., *Communication and Symbolic Behavior Scale* by Weatherby and Prizant, 1991)
- Direct observations across settings (e.g., use of ecological inventory, data from multiple environments)

Adapted from Table 5.6 in Simpson & Myles, 2008 p. 242
### Instructions:
List up to 5-10 items for each category. Include only those items that your student or child currently enjoys (or dislikes for final category).

| Things your student/child likes to eat | Potato Chips, Noodles, Fried Chicken, Oatmeal, Pasta, Meatballs & Spaghetti, Nuggets & Fries (McDonald's), Cereal, Waffles |
| Things your student/child likes to drink | Crystal Light Mixed w/ Water (Lemonade Flav.), Apple Juice, Kool-Aid, Orange & Fruit Punch (Hawaiian Punch) |
| Activities your student/child likes (watching television, spinning, sitting in a special chair, squeezes) | Sesame Street DVDs, Spinning in office chair, Musical Sites in special chair, Living Room or Den, Playing w/ Keyboard, Playing w/ Bubbles, Playing on Computer, Playing w/ Toys & other objects, Figures |
| Social games your student/child likes (Peek-a-boo, chase, tickles, etc.) | Playing Peek-a-boo w/ mom, We tell each other our names, Playful Chasing, Fun Around House/yard, Enjoys being tickled, Hide & Seek |
| Places your student/child likes to go | Parks, Bowling Alley, Chuck E. Cheese |
A parent writes a letter about communication at home
Assessment

Before the intervention

Maintenance

During the intervention

Generalization

After the intervention
Trottier, Kamp, and Mirenda (2011) conducted a study which investigated the effects of a peer mediated intervention aimed at instructing students with ASD on the use of a speech-generating device while playing a group game at school.
Peers were trained to prompt students with ASD to use the SGD during a group game, based on a hierarchy (modeling → wait 3-5 seconds for response/initiation → Verbal or gestural prompts).

Data was collected on the students use of the SGD and other forms of communication (e.g., vocalizations, gestures):
- Frequency
- Type
- Prompted or unprompted
- “Appropriate” or “Inappropriate”

Trottier, Kamp, and Mirenda (2011)
Peers were successfully trained to support students use of the SGD. This is a strategy which has some evidence for effectiveness.

| Spontaneous, appropriate initiations increased for both students | Peer independence increased and needed prompts decreased | Social interactions increased between typical peers and students with ASD. |
The researchers determined:

- One student was highly motivated by the “you’re cheating,” message, which required a change in response from peers.
- The SGD allowed the students to display more complex communication functions than through the use of vocalizations and communication symbols.
- One student had self-stimulatory behaviors which distracted him from the game and caused the peers to prompt him more often, without waiting.

Trottier, Kamp, and Mirenda (2011)
Scenario:

- 16 year old high school student who is being taught PECS by a speech therapist outside of school.
- School staff does not use PECS. Instead, they teach her to use gestures and use single-word directions (e.g., bathroom).
- The student does not use verbal language and therefore relies solely on gestures to express wants and needs.

What is the outcome of the communication intervention, based on the fidelity of implementation?
Other Examples of Communication Assessments

Data Sheet C

Program: Using a "Big Mac" to say "how can I help you?"

| Student: John Smith | Page:  | of 1 |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prompt Key</th>
<th>V</th>
<th>PV</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>PM</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>PP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Full Verbal</td>
<td>Partial Verbal</td>
<td>Model</td>
<td>Partial Model</td>
<td>Full Physical</td>
<td>Partial Physical</td>
<td></td>
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Mark each trial with: + (correct, unprompted), - (incorrect), NR (no response), or one of the prompt codes from above.

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LSUHSC Human Development Center
# Duration Recording Sheet

(Used to record the length of time a student engaged in a specific, discrete behavior)

**Student:** Casey Walters  
**Behavior:** Sustained conversation with peer (2 or more exchanges)  
**Start Recording When:** Student or peer initiates conversation  
**Stop Recording When:** Student or peer terminates conversation

- [ ] Baseline  
- [x] Intervention

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Context</th>
<th>Duration</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2/1/12</td>
<td>Schoolyard before school</td>
<td>35 s</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/1/12</td>
<td></td>
<td>43 s</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/1/12</td>
<td>During unpacking in class</td>
<td>1:05 - Talked @ video game</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/1/12</td>
<td>Bathroom break</td>
<td>2:00 - Asked @ order in line</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/1/12</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

http://www.positivelyautism.com/RecordingSheet_Duration.pdf

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LSUHSC Human Development Center
### Ecological Inventory

**Student:** Katie, age 4 (happy, great smile, loves to be with others, stubborn, and has severe physical and intellectual challenges)

**Activity:** Pretending - Trains

**Level:** Preschool

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Steps in activity</th>
<th>Natural cues</th>
<th>Student performance</th>
<th>Communication skills needed</th>
<th>Discrepancy analysis</th>
<th>Intervention plan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Goes to pretend play area</td>
<td>Teacher direction, options, preference</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Receptive: understands teacher's directions</td>
<td>Cannot physically move to area</td>
<td>Teach her to use pictorial device to choose area, then push her to that area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decides on role to play</td>
<td>Options, preference</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Expressive: states role Receptive: understands what others have chosen</td>
<td>Cannot use speech</td>
<td>Teach her to use pictorial ACD with voice output to state desired role.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Puts on costume; gets props</td>
<td>Costume/props available</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Expressive: asks for help if needed</td>
<td>Cannot use speech</td>
<td>Teach her to look for adult and use BISSmack to request help.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acts out role</td>
<td>Knowledge of role, what others say and do</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Receptive: understands other's roles Expressive: responds to others; plays role</td>
<td>Limited language, cannot use speech</td>
<td>Teach her to use pictorial ACD with voice output. Teach peers to interact.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stops playing</td>
<td>Teacher direction</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>Receptive: understands teacher</td>
<td>Cannot physically handle items</td>
<td>Have aide support her arm while Katie works with a peer to hold and release item to peer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Puts items away</td>
<td>Teacher direction, knowledge of class rule</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Receptive: understands teacher</td>
<td>Cannot physically handle items</td>
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</table>

Figure 2.5. Functional ecological inventory of communication skills for Katie, a 4-year-old with severe physical and intellectual disabilities.

Downing, 1999
### PECS Phase II Trial-by-Trial

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<tr>
<th>Name:</th>
<th>Location:</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Trial</th>
<th>Travel To Trainer</th>
<th>Distance To Trainer</th>
<th>Travel To Board</th>
<th>Distance To Board</th>
<th>Picture</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<td>Staff Initials</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Item</td>
<td>Pick-Up</td>
<td>Reach</td>
<td>Release</td>
<td>Open Hand</td>
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<td>10/10</td>
<td>Snack</td>
<td>Juice</td>
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<td>PP (+)</td>
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Frost & Bondy, 2002
A Teacher Discusses Progress
Reflect and Wrap-Up

- Do the students you work with or your child have functional communication systems?

- If not, what are your next steps to setting them up?
  - Determine best-fit evidence-based practices
  - Implement with fidelity
  - Monitor progress

- If so, how do you know they’re working?
  - Increased forms and functions?
  - More content?
  - Increased partners and social interactions?
  - Generalization across settings?

- What data collection strategies to go you have in your toolbox? What information on other strategies do you need?
Where Can You Go for More Information…

- LSUHSC Human Development Center: www.hdc.lsuhsc.edu
- National Professional Development Center on Autism Spectrum Disorders: http://autismmpdc.fpg.unc.edu/
- Autism Internet Modules: http://www.autisminternetmodules.org/
- PECS: http://www.pecs.com/
- http://www.positivelyautism.com (data recording templates)


• Simpson, R.L, & Myles, B.S. (Eds.)(2008). *Educating Students and Youth with Autism*. Austin, TX.: Pro-Ed.
