Early Communication for Children with Severe Disabilities
-Day 2-
### Generic Intervention Goals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Communication</th>
<th>Intervention Goals</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>I. Pre-intentional (Reactive) Behavior</strong></td>
<td>Establish purposeful behavior by creating highly responsive environments.</td>
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<td><strong>II. Intentional (Pro-active) Behavior</strong></td>
<td>Respond to potentially communicative behaviors so that the child becomes aware of their communicative purpose.</td>
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<td><strong>III. Nonconventional Presymbolic Communication</strong></td>
<td>Shape nonconventional gestures into conventional gestures and/or target symbol use.</td>
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<td><strong>IV. Conventional Presymbolic Communication</strong></td>
<td>Teach 1:1 correspondence between symbols (concrete or abstract) and referents.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>V. Concrete Symbolic Communication</strong></td>
<td>Teach 1:1 correspondence between abstract symbols and referents.</td>
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<td><strong>VI. Abstract Symbolic Communication</strong></td>
<td>Teach the combination of symbols into two- and three-symbol utterances.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>VII. Formal Symbolic Communication (Language)</strong></td>
<td>Expand semantic and syntactic abilities.</td>
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Planning Intervention
Goal setting

• What level of communicative competence to target (I-VII)

• What communicative behaviors and intents/functions to target
Considerations:

• Is the learner ready to move on to the next level or do we need to focus on increasing his/her competence at this current level?
– Does the learner readily exhibit her current communication skills whenever the opportunity arises or does it only occur when she is given very specific prompts

– Is the learner able to use his present skills across a variety of topics settings and with different partners
What about the Communication Behaviors

– Is the learner able to communicate in a variety of ways
  • Are these behaviors that are easy for him to do

  • Do others recognize these behaviors as communicative

  • Are these the most natural behaviors he could use to communicate

  • Are the behaviors being considered within his sensory abilities
cognitive abilities
What messages will the learner communicate

• Do you continue to target only the existing functions/intents or do you add new functions?
  – What other functions does she have the need for
  – What opportunities does the environment provide her to use other communicative functions/intents
Where to target communication opportunities

• Ideally any- and every- where
• If necessary pick those situations where the child’s interests are the greatest
• AND where you can insure the most consistency from the social environment
Pre-Symbolic Communication
Key Elements of Individualized Instruction

• MOTIVATION: What are reinforcing topics and settings for the learner to communicate about?

• POTENTIAL RESPONSES: How will the learner express himself/herself?

• GAINING ATTENTION: How will the learner initiate communication with others?

• REINSTATEMENT: How will the learner indicate to another person that s/he would like to continue an interaction?

• REQUESTING/CHOICEMAKING: How will the learner indicate his/her preference between two or more objects?

• PROMOTING PROGRESS: How do you design instruction to promote steady progress?
**Pre-Symbolic Communication**

**Key Elements of Individualized Instruction**

- **MOTIVATION**: What are really important or exciting things that the learner may want to communicate about

- The materials or activities are highly motivating

- Conduct a preference probe to determine the learner's interests

- Opportunities for instruction should occur regularly for consistency

- Opportunities should occur frequently enough to insure adequate practice
POTENTIAL RESPONSES: How will the learner express himself/herself?

- The behavior may allow the learner to act directly on a person or on an object.
- The absence of the behavior during interaction may mean “No thank you, try again.”
- The behavior should be readable or
- Other people may need to be trained to recognize and respond to the learner’s behavior.
- The behavior should be do-able for the learner and it should not be difficult for the learner to do over again.
- This may include: Body movement*Emotional responses*Vocalizations*Gestures*Switches
- The behavior should be acceptable to you and others in that setting.
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<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Salient Behavior</th>
<th>Intervention Goal</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. Pre-intentional</td>
<td>Pre-intentional or reflexive behavior that expresses <strong>state</strong> of subject. State (e.g. hungry or wet) is interpreted by caregiver</td>
<td>Establish purposeful behavior by creating highly responsive environments</td>
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</table>
Early social/communicative interaction for the infant with sensory impairments

• The infant lacks many of the cues from the parent (visual and auditory)

• The infant may respond differently in response to the cues they do perceive (quieting rather than turning toward the source or increasing movements)
Pre-Symbolic Communication

Key Elements of Individualized Instruction

- **REINSTATEMENT:** How will the learner show you that s/he would like to continue doing something they like?

- Reinstatement activities can let the learner know about new games and toys

- Behaviors that let you know they want to keep going are used to maintain a desired interaction once it has begun

- How often the learner lets you know they want to keep going with certain activities can tell you about how much they really like something or not

- It is important to expect that the learner can let you know in some way

- It is important to give the learner enough time to let you know
Reinstatement may be introduction to conversation

- Turn-taking
- Initiating
- Maintaining
- Ending or changing interactions
Why reinstatement activities may be important

• Parents of a child with sensory impairments may be less likely to label the environment for their child
• The child may be less likely to direct their parent’s attention to things in the environment
• Resulting in child lacking experiences and familiarities with his world
**Reinstatement Activity Form**

**Partner Initiate Activity:** w/ child. Look for indications +/- Pause briefly (7sec) between interactions, observe for child attempts to reinstate, before continuing. Code child behavior (e.g. Partner strokes child’s hair; pause...Child smiles/coos..Partner repeats stroking)

**Child initiates attention:** Partner attends w/in 3-5 seconds. Code partner response

**Code child behavior**
- Partner strokes child's hair; pause...
- Child smiles/coos..Partner repeats stroking

**Date:**

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<tr>
<th>Partner Initiated Activity</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<th>V</th>
<th>A</th>
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<th>F</th>
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<td><strong>Description</strong> leg play  In chair, on bed, or sofa hold both feet and shake/bicycle legs</td>
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<td><strong>Description</strong> cheek tickle holding, in chair on bed or sofa tickle cheek lightly with finger</td>
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<td><strong>Description</strong> towel on face in chair play peek-a-boo with diaper or bib</td>
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**Child Initiation**

**Child Responses:** List code (e.g. S= smile; V+/- = positive vocalization) that best describes
- GM; general movement
- H; head movement
- V+/-; vocalization
- A; arm movement
- L; leg movement
- F+/-; Facial
- N/R; no response

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Communication Intervention for Children with Severe and Multiple Disabilities
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Vocabulary/Materials

List the specific materials used in this activity to teach or practice the target skills
Instructional Cues:

Describe what the teacher does to elicit a response from the learner
Consequence

How does the partner respond to the child’s behavior?
Target Behavior:

Describe how the learner is to respond.