

Sample Communication IEP Objectives/Skills and Strategies

The following communication skills are arranged from most basic to more advanced. However, students with multiple, complex disabilities may demonstrate skills that do not follow a typical developmental progression.

Skills/Objectives	Strategies
<p>The student will show awareness of another person, activity, object, sound, or voice by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • turning head or body • looking in direction of source • opening eyes wider • changing body tone 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cue attention (<i>e.g., Tap shoulder or upper arm to gain student's attention; respond in an animated when s/he looks at you.</i>) • Give student feedback about his/her response to changes in the environment (<i>e.g., "Cory, you turned your head toward the door. That was Tristan coming in."</i>)
<p>The student will seek attention by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • vocalizing • gesturing or reaching out • looking at another person • changing body tone (<i>e.g., increase in breathing rate</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't anticipate every need. • Provide opportunities for the student to initiate attention-getting behaviour (<i>e.g., stop pushing the student's wheelchair and wait for him/her to get your attention.</i>) • Interpret out loud what the student is doing and what you think s/he wants, so that s/he learns what s/he is doing has an effect on others actions.
<p>The student will communicate pleasure or displeasure by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • laughing, crying, other vocalizations • facial expression • changing body tone 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine the student's preferences for a variety of objects or activities. • Offer student both preferred and non-preferred objects/activities. • Observe and interpret the response (<i>e.g., "You're smiling. I think you like ____."</i>).
<p>The student will acknowledge another person's communication by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • turning towards a voice • looking at the person • changing facial expression • gesturing/reaching • changing body tone • vocalizing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call the student's name. • Talk about what is happening around the student. • Pause frequently, and wait silently for up to 10 seconds, for the student to respond. • Interpret out loud what the student is doing and what you think s/he wants.
<p>The student will request more of an enjoyable object or activity that has been interrupted by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • looking at the object/activity • changing facial expression • gesturing/reaching • changing body tone • vocalizing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage the student with a preferred object or activity (<i>e.g., reading a book</i>). • Remove/pause the object/activity; wait expectantly for the student to let you know that s/he wants 'more' • Say out loud what the student is doing & that you think s/he wants more of the object/activity (<i>e.g., You're getting stiff. I think</i>

	<i>you want me to read some more.”)</i>
<p>The student will request assistance by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •looking at person/object/activity •gesturing/reaching •changing body tone •vocalizing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Try not to anticipate student’s every need. • Wait for student to communicate a need for help. • Place a tempting activity (object) within visual range of the student, and wait for him/her to communicate a request for help to get it.
<p>The student will request an object/activity by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •looking at the object/activity •gesturing/reaching •vocalizing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create situations that ‘tempt’ the student to request the object or activity (<i>e.g., Place a tempting object/activity within visual range, and wait for the student to look, gesture, or vocalize to request it).</i>)
<p>The student will indicate acceptance or rejection of an object or activity by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •looking at object/activity to accept; looking away to reject •reaching/gesturing toward the object/activity for acceptance; pushing object away for rejection •smiling for acceptance; frowning/pursing lips for rejection •vocalizing in a ‘positive’ way for acceptance and in a ‘negative’ way for rejection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show the student an object to be used by itself or as part of an activity. • Wait silently for up to 10 seconds for the student to demonstrate acceptance or rejection. • Say out loud what the student is doing and what you think s/he wants. • Give the object or take it away, depending on what the student has communicated.
<p>The student will demonstrate anticipation of an upcoming activity or object by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •looking toward the object or activity location •increasing physical tone •reaching/gesturing toward the object cue/activity location •changing facial expression (smiling, frowning) •vocalizing either ‘positively’ or ‘negatively’ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell the student what is going to happen next, or show or give the student either the object or object cue. • Wait silently for up to 10 seconds for the student to demonstrate anticipation. • Say out loud what the student is doing and what you think s/he wants (<i>e.g., “I see you smile. I think you’re happy about going to music.”</i>)
<p>The student will respond to greetings or farewells by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •looking toward the communication partner •changing facial expression •gesturing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Say ‘hi’ to the student at the beginning of an interaction, and ‘bye’ at the end of, while gently touching his/her arm. • Wait silently for up to 10 seconds for a response. • After the student responds to your

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •changing body tone •vocalizing 	greeting/farewell, say how happy you are that s/he she looked, smiled, waved, etc.
<p>The student will take turns in a communicative interaction by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •using different facial expressions •vocalizing •gesturing or pointing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage the student by speaking with him (<i>e.g., turn taking activities, having a conversation about pictures, objects, activities</i>) • Comment about the activity, then wait silently for up to 10 seconds for the student to take his turn by gesturing, vocalizing, etc.
<p>The student will make a choice between 2 objects/activities by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •looking at one of them •reaching/gesturing/pointing to one of them 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide opportunities for choice making within all routines. Show and describe one object/activity at a time, then present both items and ask the student to make a choice, using the preferred method of choosing.
<p>The student will make a choice between 2 pictures by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •looking at one of the pictures •reaching/gesturing/pointing to one of the pictures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show and describe each picture separately. • Then present both pictures and ask the student to make a choice, using his/her preferred method of choosing.
<p>The student will make a choice between multiple pictures by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •looking at one of the pictures •reaching/gesturing/pointing to one of the pictures •raising a hand, or in some way communicating 'yes' when the choices are being verbally labeled. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Label and describe each of the picture choices first before asking the student to make a choice (make sure that the student can see the pictures) • Ask the student to choose by using his/her preferred method (i.e., pointing; gaze; gesture; vocalization)
<p>The student will comment about an object or activity by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •looking at and vocalizing about an object or activity •using a voice output device •touching pictures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage the student in a 'conversation' by talking about what is happening/ • Silently wait for up to 10 seconds for a response (<i>e.g., looking, vocalizing, using voice output, touching pictures</i>). • Acknowledge, and try to keep the conversation going.
<p>The student will request information by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •looking/vocalizing at the object/activity and then at the communication partner with a questioning facial expression •touching pictures, then looking at the communication partner with a questioning expression •signing •using voice output 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide situations that 'tempt' the student to request information (<i>e.g., shake a box to rattle a hidden object inside it; visit a new environment</i>). Wait silently for 10 seconds for the student to request information by signing, vocalizing, etc. • Tell the student what you observed them doing/saying to request information (<i>e.g., "Your wide open eyes tells me you're wondering what's inside this box."</i>) • Respond to the student's request (<i>e.g., "Let's open the box and see what's inside."</i>)