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The attached forms were created by the augmentative communication specialists out of necessity. For 20 years there have been two augmentative communication specialists hired to provide services to three counties. Initially, we were serving any student, regardless of language and cognitive levels, who was not using speech for communication. In time, we began to see that many of the early augmentative communication needs could be met in the classroom setting by the teaching staff and would not require a “specialist” to begin this process.

The short form, the *Augmentative Communication Screening Checklist* was designed to determine the student’s level of augmentative communication skills. Its function is to provide teachers with a list of skills that can be developed as part of the classroom curriculum.

The long form, *Augmentative Communication Teaching Strategies* was designed to empower teachers to instruct and support their students in the development of those same augmentative communication skills.

A request for formal augmentative communication intervention is appropriate if the student masters all skills on the Augmentative Communication Screening Checklist.

Peggie Grosh, MS, SLP
Augmentative Communication Specialist



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Augmentative Communication Screening Checklist

Child's Name: _____ DOB: _____ Date filled out: _____ By: _____

A student must be able to perform each of the following skills at 90% or more **before** you make a referral for an augmentative communication evaluation. If there are items marked "no," refer to the *Augmentative Communication Teaching Strategies* form for ways to teach these skills. Please contact your supervisor for your department's specific referral procedure. Note: If you have concerns about a student's ability to **motorically** access things in his or her environment, use an **Assistive Technology** referral.

____ 1. (Y or N)	Student uses intentional, purposeful behaviors directed to another person with the intention to communicate (e.g., looks at object, then adult; reaches towards objects/action then looks at adult; points to object, then looks at adult; vocalizes, then looks at adult). Describe the behavior: _____
____ 2.	There are a number of objects, people, and events known to be reinforcing to the student. List the items: _____
____ 3.	The student uses a consistent, understandable signal (reaches out, vocalizes, etc.) to indicate he wants more of a known reinforcer (cause & effect). Describe the behavior: _____
____ 4.	The student scans 2 objects (visually or auditorily). Describe the behavior/list the items: _____
____ 5.	The student scans a preferred and a non-preferred object, and consistently uses the signal to choose the preferred object. Describe the behavior: _____
____ 6.	The student uses the signal to choose among three or four objects or activities. Describe the behavior: _____
____ 7.	The student matches at least four pictures to their corresponding objects or actions. List the items: _____
____ 8.	The student scans two pictures (visually or auditorily). Describe the behavior/list the items: _____
____ 9.	The student visually or auditorily scans a preferred and a non-preferred picture, and consistently chooses the pictures for the preferred item. Describe the behavior/list the items: _____
____ 10.	The student has a preferred symbolic vocabulary of at least four items. List the items: _____

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Polk Center

167 N. Knox St. Monmouth, OR 97361
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Yamhill Center

2045 SW Hwy 18, Suite 100 McMinnville, OR 97128
Phone: 503-435-5900 Fax: 503-435-5920

Augmentative Communication Teaching Strategies

Use the following strategies to teach the communication skills on the *Augmentative Communication Screening Checklist*. For each “no” answer, use the Teaching Strategies in the second column to teach the student the Communication Skill in the first column. When you have marked “Yes” (90% accurate, over a **minimum of 10 trials**) to all the items, you can proceed with the AAC evaluation referral. Please contact your supervisor for your specific referral procedure.

Note: Generally, the items are in hierarchical/developmental order, although some, such as the first two, may be interchangeable, and **a student may be developing skills in several areas at any given time**. Please make sure you are aware of all the skills your student is working on.

Student’s name: _____ Date(s) completed: _____ Completed by: _____

Communication Skill	Teaching Strategies	Teacher/Staff Notes & Comments
1. Student uses intentional, purposeful behaviors directed to another person with <i>intention to communicate</i> (e.g. looks at object, then adult; reaches toward object, then adult; or vocalizes, then looks at adult). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Yes? ___ see Teacher/Staff Notes column. b. No? ___ see next column. 	<p>Goal: Develop intentional communication behaviors that are directed to another person.</p> <p>Strategy: Respond to and reinforce the student’s pre-intentional behaviors as though they are <i>intentionally</i> requesting something.</p> <p>Example: Student looks at a favorite toy. Adult gets the toy, gets the student to look at it, and says the name of the toy while giving it to the student.</p> <p>Retest: Go back to previous column. If yes, proceed to another item. If no, repeat strategy until you can mark “yes.”</p>	<p>If you marked “yes,” describe the student’s behavior(s):</p> <p>Other notes or comments:</p>

<p>2. Staff can list a number of objects, people, and/or activities they know are reinforcing (preferred) to the student.</p> <p>a. Yes? ___ see Teacher/Staff Notes column.</p> <p>b. No? ___ see next column.</p>	<p>Goal: Develop a list of at least four known reinforcers for the student. This means the student can recognize desired objects/activities, and is reinforced when he or she gets these items (which will encourage communication).</p> <p>Strategy: Provide a variety of sensory stimuli (visual, auditory, tactile, kinesthetic, taste). Note which ones the student responds positively to (e.g., smiles, reaches, laughs, maintains gaze, orients or moves body toward, points at, touches, etc)</p> <p>Examples: Try several of the following: foods (various flavors and safe textures); toys that move, light up, or make sound; activities such as rocking, walking, or brushing; favorite people to eat with or play with.</p> <p>Retest: Go back to previous column. If yes, proceed to another item. If no, repeat strategy until you can mark “yes.”</p>	<p>If you marked “yes,” list the objects, people, or activities (at least four) that are reinforcing to the student:</p> <p>Other notes or comments:</p>
<p>3. Student uses a consistent, understandable signal (e.g. reaches, gazes at, vocalizes, moves toward, touches) to indicate he or she wants more of one of the known reinforcers from #2.</p> <p>a. Yes? ___ see Teacher/Staff Notes column.</p> <p>b. No? ___ see next column.</p>	<p>Goal: Develop a consistent, understandable (by staff) response (signal) from the list in #2 (e.g. always vocalizes to get more rocking, 9 times out of 10 leans toward favorite item).</p> <p>Strategy: Do short-duration, reinforcing activities; pause and wait for student to use the signal to get “more” of the item or activity. Aim for many repetitions.</p> <p>Examples: Hold a previously determined reinforcing object (e.g. a favorite toy) in front of the student and ask, “Do you want ___?” Or, rock the child for a few seconds, then stop and ask, “Want more rocking?” Note: It’s important to be sure the object or activity is in fact something the child wants! If the student does respond using a clear signal, give him the object or do the activity, and verbally reinforce him with praise or by naming the object/activity. If he does not respond (and you are <i>sure</i> he wants the object), you can help him use the signal to obtain the reinforcer (e.g., physically turn his head toward the object, physically move his hand to touch the object, etc.)</p> <p>Retest: Go back to previous column. If yes, proceed to another item. If no, repeat strategy until you can mark “yes.”</p>	<p>If you marked “yes,” describe the student’s behavior (what is the signal he or she uses to get what he wants?):</p> <p>Other notes or comments:</p>

<p>4. Student scans two objects (visually or auditorily).</p> <p>a. Yes? ___ see Teacher/Staff Notes column.</p> <p>b. No? ___ see next column.</p>	<p>Goal: Student can distinguish between objects either by sight or by sound. Note: in this skill, the student is simply taking notice of the objects shown by the staff, not indicating a preference.</p> <p>Strategy: Emphasize one object (e.g. with light, movement, or sound), then the next, until the student attends/orients consistently to each object.</p> <p>Example: Hold up two toys and wiggle one of them back and forth until the student consistently looks, turns his or her head, reaches for the moving object, etc.</p> <p>Retest: Go back to previous column. If yes, proceed to another item. If no, repeat strategy until you can mark “yes.”</p>	<p>If you marked “yes,” describe the student’s behavior (what tells you he or she is paying attention to each?):</p> <p>Other notes or comments:</p>
<p>5. Student visually (or auditorily) scans a preferred and non-preferred object, and consistently uses the established signal (from #3) to choose the preferred object.</p> <p>a. Yes? ___ see Teacher/Staff Notes column.</p> <p>b. No? ___ see next column.</p>	<p>Goal: Student can distinguish between preferred and non-preferred objects and activities, and <i>indicate a choice</i> of the preferred object or activity.</p> <p>Strategy: Note: It’s important to be sure the object or activity is in fact something the student wants! If the student does respond using a clear signal, give her the object or do the activity, and verbally reinforce her by naming the object/activity. If she does not respond, or chooses the non-preferred item (and you are <i>sure</i> she wants the other object), help her use the signal to request the preferred item (e.g., physically turn her head toward the object, physically move her hand to touch the object, etc.). Name the object and praise her.</p> <p>Examples: The student prefers a hand-held game (which she chooses by pointing), and does not prefer a crumpled piece of paper. She points to the paper. Adult moves her hand to point to the game and says, “I want game” (or something similar), then gives the student the item.</p> <p>Retest: Go back to previous column. If yes, proceed to another item. If no, repeat strategy until you can mark “yes.”</p>	<p>If you marked “yes,” describe the student’s behavior (what is the signal she or he uses to get which item(s)?):</p> <p>Other notes or comments:</p>

<p>6. Student consistently uses the established signal to choose at least four objects or activities.</p> <p>a. Yes? ___ see Teacher/Staff Notes column.</p> <p>b. No? ___ see next column.</p>	<p>Goal: Student consistently uses the established signal to choose a greater variety of preferred objects and activities (this combines the skills mastered in #2 and #3).</p> <p>Strategy: If the student does not respond consistently, first make sure the field of choices is accessible to the student (e.g. he can see all of the items, reach all, etc) and the student is paying attention. Re-try. If still not, try: If the student is not using a clear signal to choose at least one item, use the strategies in #3 to develop a consistent, clear signal; then expand that signal to at least four objects. If the student uses the signal consistently but does not respond to at least four reinforcers, use the strategies in #2 to develop more preferred items.</p> <p>Examples: The student prefers “gummy” candy (he always smiles and accepts them when offered), but does not intentionally, clearly request them. Staff notices that his eye gaze follows the candy when she takes it out of the package; she uses the strategies in #3 to help him learn to deliberately fix his gaze on the candy when it is offered, to indicate he wants some.</p> <p>The student consistently reaches for her one preferred item, a stuffed dog. She doesn’t reach for any other items. Using the strategies in #2, the staff presents other similar items (e.g. other stuffed animals, other soft things, other types of toy dogs) until they have discovered at least three other items the student finds reinforcing.</p> <p>Retest: Go back to previous column. If yes, proceed to another item. If no, repeat strategy until you can mark “yes.”</p>	<p>If you marked “yes,” describe the student’s behavior (which signal(s) does he or she use to request which item(s)?):</p> <p>Other notes or comments:</p>
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<p>7. Student matches at least 4 pictures consistently to their corresponding objects or activities (that is, he understands the connection between the object and the picture).</p> <p>a. Yes? ___ see Teacher/Staff Notes column.</p> <p>b. No? ___ see next column.</p>	<p>Goal: Student associates symbols with real objects or activities (note: in this case, the symbols are <i>pictures</i>; however, other types of symbols may sometimes be used. Example: an object, such as a block, is used to represent “play time”). (Important: this understanding of symbols is the beginning of <i>language</i>).</p> <p>Strategy: Begin to use pictures receptively with the student. Pair a picture with the object or activity it represents as you present them to the student. Verbally name the object/activity. Aim for many repetitions. Introduce several items in this way, then hold up two of the pictures without the objects. Name one of the pictures, and wait for the student to choose. If he chooses the correct picture, praise him and give him both the object and the picture. If he chooses the incorrect picture, go back to showing the picture and object together and naming them. Test again.</p> <p>Example: The student consistently reaches out when a ball is offered. Pair the picture of the ball with the ball itself. Say “ball” as you show them both to him. Later, show him a second preferred item, e.g. a toy truck. Show him the truck and its picture together and say “truck.” When you think he is ready, present the picture of the ball and truck, say one, and wait for him to reach for it. If he chooses the named item, praise him and give him the item. If he doesn’t choose, or chooses the other item, go back to presenting the objects and the pictures together.</p> <p>Retest: Go back to previous column. If yes, proceed to another item. If no, repeat strategy until you can mark “yes.”</p>	<p>If you marked “yes,” describe the student’s behavior (which items does the student match to their corresponding pictures?):</p> <p>Other notes or comments:</p>
<p>8. Student scans two pictures (visually or auditorily).</p> <p>a. Yes? ___ see Teacher/Staff Notes column.</p> <p>b. No? ___ see next column.</p>	<p>Goal: Student attends to, or examines, two symbols. Note: in this skill, the student is simply taking notice of the pictures shown by the staff, not indicating a preference.</p> <p>Strategy: Emphasize one picture (e.g. with light, movement, or sound), then the next, until the student attends/orients consistently to each picture.</p> <p>Examples: Hold up two pictures and move one of them back and forth until the student consistently looks, turns his or her head, reaches for the moving picture, etc.</p> <p>Retest: Go back to previous column. If yes, proceed to another item. If no, repeat strategy until you can mark “yes.”</p>	<p>If you marked “yes,” describe the student’s behavior (how can you tell she or he is scanning each picture?):</p> <p>Other notes or comments:</p>

<p>9. Student visually (or auditorily) scans pictures of preferred and non-preferred objects/activities, and consistently uses the established signal to choose the preferred picture.</p> <p>a. Yes? ___ see Teacher/Staff Notes column.</p> <p>b. No? ___ see next column.</p>	<p>Goal: Student can distinguish between preferred and non-preferred symbols (pictures), and <i>indicate a choice</i> of the preferred picture.</p> <p>Strategy: Note: It's important to be sure the picture is of an object or activity the student in fact wants! If the student does respond using a clear signal, give her the picture and the object/do the activity, praise her and name the object/activity. If she does not respond, or chooses the picture of the non-preferred item (and you are <i>sure</i> she prefers the other picture), help her use the signal to choose the picture of the preferred item (e.g., physically turn her head toward the picture, physically move her hand to touch the picture, etc.). Name the pictured object and praise her.</p> <p>Note: At this point, you may want to put the pictures on a simple voice output device, such as a Big Mac.</p> <p>Example: The student prefers a tape player (which she chooses by grasping for), and does not prefer a sock. She grasps at the picture of the sock. An adult helps her grasp the picture of the tape player and says "tape player" (or "music," etc), then gives her the tape player.</p> <p>Retest: Go back to previous column. If yes, proceed to another item. If no, repeat strategy until you can mark "yes."</p>	<p>If you marked "yes," describe the student's behavior (what is the signal she or he uses to get which item(s)?):</p> <p>Other notes or comments:</p>
<p>10. Student has a preferred symbolic (picture) vocabulary of at least four items (that is, consistently uses the signal to choose the pictures representing the preferred objects or activities).</p> <p>a. Yes? ___ see Teacher/Staff Notes column.</p> <p>b. No? ___ see next column.</p>	<p>Goal: Student has a list of known reinforcers, and uses the signal consistently to request pictures that represent a variety of objects or activities she wants.</p> <p>Strategy: Continue to receptively introduce picture representations to build expressive vocabulary. Teach/provide pictures that represent things the student is already trying to express using his or her communication behaviors.</p> <p>Again, you may want to place the symbols on a speech output device (e.g. a Big Mac, Tech Talk, Enabling, etc). Let the student hear the words for the symbols.</p> <p>Examples: The student prefers a swing (leans toward it 9 out of 10 opportunities), but does not intentionally choose the <i>picture</i> of the swing. Using the strategies in #7, staff pairs the slide picture with the actual slide, then re-tries.</p> <p>Retest: Go back to previous column. If yes, proceed to another item. If no, repeat strategy until you can mark "yes."</p>	<p>If you marked "yes," describe the student's behavior (what signal does the student use to choose which items?):</p> <p>Final notes or comments:</p>