

The Importance of Communication

Division for Special Education Services and Supports
Webinar Series Supporting Students with the Most Significant
Cognitive Disabilities

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Communication

National Joint Committee for the Communication Needs of Persons With Severe Disabilities (NJC)

All people with a disability of any extent or severity have a basic right to affect, through communication, the conditions of their existence. Beyond this general right, a number of specific communication rights should be ensured in all daily interactions and interventions involving persons who have severe disabilities. To participate fully in communication interactions, each person has these fundamental communication rights:

[National Joint Committee for the Communication Needs of Persons With Severe Disabilities \(NJC\)](#)

COMMUNICATION BILL OF RIGHTS

1. The right to interact socially, maintain social closeness, and build relationships.
2. The right to request desired objects, actions, events, and people.
3. The right to refuse or reject undesired objects, actions, events, or choices.
4. The right to express personal preferences and feelings.
5. The right to make choices from meaningful alternatives.
6. The right to make comments and share opinions.
7. The right to ask for and give information, including information about changes in routine and environment.

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COMMUNICATION BILL OF RIGHTS

8. The right to be informed about people and events in one's life.
9. The right to access interventions and supports that improve communication.
10. The right to have communication acts acknowledged and responded to even when the desired outcome cannot be realized.
11. The right to have access to functioning AAC (augmentative and alternative communication) and other AT (assistive technology) services and devices at all times.
12. The right to access environmental contexts, interactions, and opportunities that promote participation as full communication partners with other people, including peers.

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COMMUNICATION BILL OF RIGHTS

13. The right to be treated with dignity and addressed with respect and courtesy.
14. The right to be addressed directly and not be spoken for or talked about in the third person while present.
15. The right to have clear, meaningful, and culturally and linguistically appropriate communications.

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I have the right to...

have friends!
ask for things.
say "no"!
tell you how I feel.
make a choice.
tell you what I think!
take and give information.

[Communication Bill of Rights ICON link](#)

Communication Bill of Rights

to be given real choices

to say no, refuse and reject choices

to ask for what I want

to share my feelings

to be heard and responded to even if the answer is no

to ask for and get attention and interaction

ask and know about my schedule and world

SCHEDULE

1. bus
2. reading
3. math
4. lunch
5. recess

to have my speech system in working order and to have a back up

to be a full and equal member of my community

to be treated with respect and dignity

to be spoken with, not about

to be communicated with in a sensitive manner

I have the right:

From the National Joint Committee for the Communicative Needs of Persons with Severe Disabilities. (1992). for meeting the communication needs of persons with severe disabilities. Asha. 34(Suppl. 7). 2-3. adapted by K. Al

Preparing Teachers to Facilitate Communication Skills in Students with Severe Disabilities



Peckham-Hardin, K. D., Hanreddy, A., & Ogletree, B. T. (2018). Preparing teachers to facilitate communication skills in students with severe disabilities (Document No. IC17). Retrieved from University of Florida, Collaboration for Effective Educator Development, Accountability, and Reform Center website: <http://cedar.education.ufl.edu/tools/innovation-configurations/>

Expected Communicative Abilities

Students with severe disabilities demonstrate restricted communication abilities compared to age-matched peers,

Which does not suggest that people with severe disabilities do not communicate.

PRESUME Competence

Communication Abilities

- Students with severe disabilities can be expected to use idiosyncratic communicative forms to communicate for a variety of communicative purposes
 - body movements
 - squeals and cries
 - expressions
 - behaviors [including aberrant])
- conventional communicative forms
 - gestures
 - vocal speech-like approximations
 - gaze
 - words
 - non-speech symbols to communicate for a variety of communicative purposes
 - requesting
 - protesting
 - greeting
 - commenting
- Receptively, this population may understand multiple symbol forms and even simple grammar, or may only possess general environmental awareness (Ogletree, Bruce, Finch, Fahey, & McLean, 2011).

What is Core Vocabulary?

Core vocabulary is a statistical concept related to overall frequency of words

These are high frequency words that occur across ages, activities, topics and populations.

- 80% of the words we use are comprised of core vocabulary words
 - 78-80% of those words are from a set of 350-400 words
- 60% of the words we use are within the 100 most frequently occurring words
- 40-50% of the words we use are within the 50 most frequently occurring words



Communication Board

A collection of communication board icons arranged on a light purple background. The icons include:

- head (face icon), hand (hand icon)
- I (yellow box with 'I'), my/mine (person icon), it (red box), you (two people icon), here (hand pointing to a spot), yes (smiley face), no (red X), want (person with box), what (question mark), to (arrow), first (train icon), can (person), have (person), do (arrow), go (green arrow), help (person with hand), like (smiley face), read (open book), tell (two people), finish (person with checkmark), sing (person with microphone), see (eye icon), good (thumbs up), bad (thumbs down), and more (two hands).

friend (two people)	boy (boy)	girl (girl)	mother (woman)	father (man)	brother (boy)	sister (girl)	head (face)	hand (hand)	foot (foot)	feet (feet)
I (yellow box)	me (person)	what (question mark)	where (map)	now (clock)	later (person with arrow)	today (sun)	same (two red squares)	diffrent (red and blue squares)	big (large red square)	little (small red square)
my/mine (person)	is / am are	to (arrow)	first (train)	next (two red squares)	last (train)	all gone (hand with paper)	ready (person with checkmark)	busy (person with clock)	happy (smiley face)	sad (frowny face)
it (red box)	can (person)	have (person)	come (person with arrow)	feel (two faces)	know (person with book)	give (two people)	angry-mad (angry face)	messy (messy table)	good (thumbs up)	bad (thumbs down)
you (two people)	do (arrow)	eat (person with fork)	drink (cup)	finish (person with checkmark)	get (person with box)	sing (person with microphone)	that (hand pointing)	a the	and (+)	more (two hands)
your (two people)	don't-not (red X)	go (green arrow)	help (person with hand)	open (box with arrow)	put (person with box)	see (eye)	again (curved arrow)	in (box with arrow)	away (person with arrow)	on (lightbulb)
here (hand pointing)	there (hand pointing)	like (smiley face)	play (person with ball)	read (open book)	stop (STOP sign)	walk (person)	show (person with arrow)	out (hand pointing out)	up (up arrow)	off (lightbulb)
yes (smiley face)	no (red X)	want (person with box)	take (person with box)	tell (two people)	turn (curved arrow)	watch (TV)	write (hand with paper)	front (hand pointing)	down (down arrow)	with (two hands)

Color Coding Chart for AAC

- Color coding helps students find words by the category they are in and helps make the board easy to navigate by making breaks in the different areas of the board.
 - Based on the Fitzgerald Key



People/Pronouns – Yellow (he, she)



Nouns – Orange (pretzel, truck)



Verbs/Action Words – Green (go, want)



Wh- Question Words – Purple (who, what, where)



Adjectives/Describing Words – Blue (big, little)



Negation/Emergency – Red (not, don't)

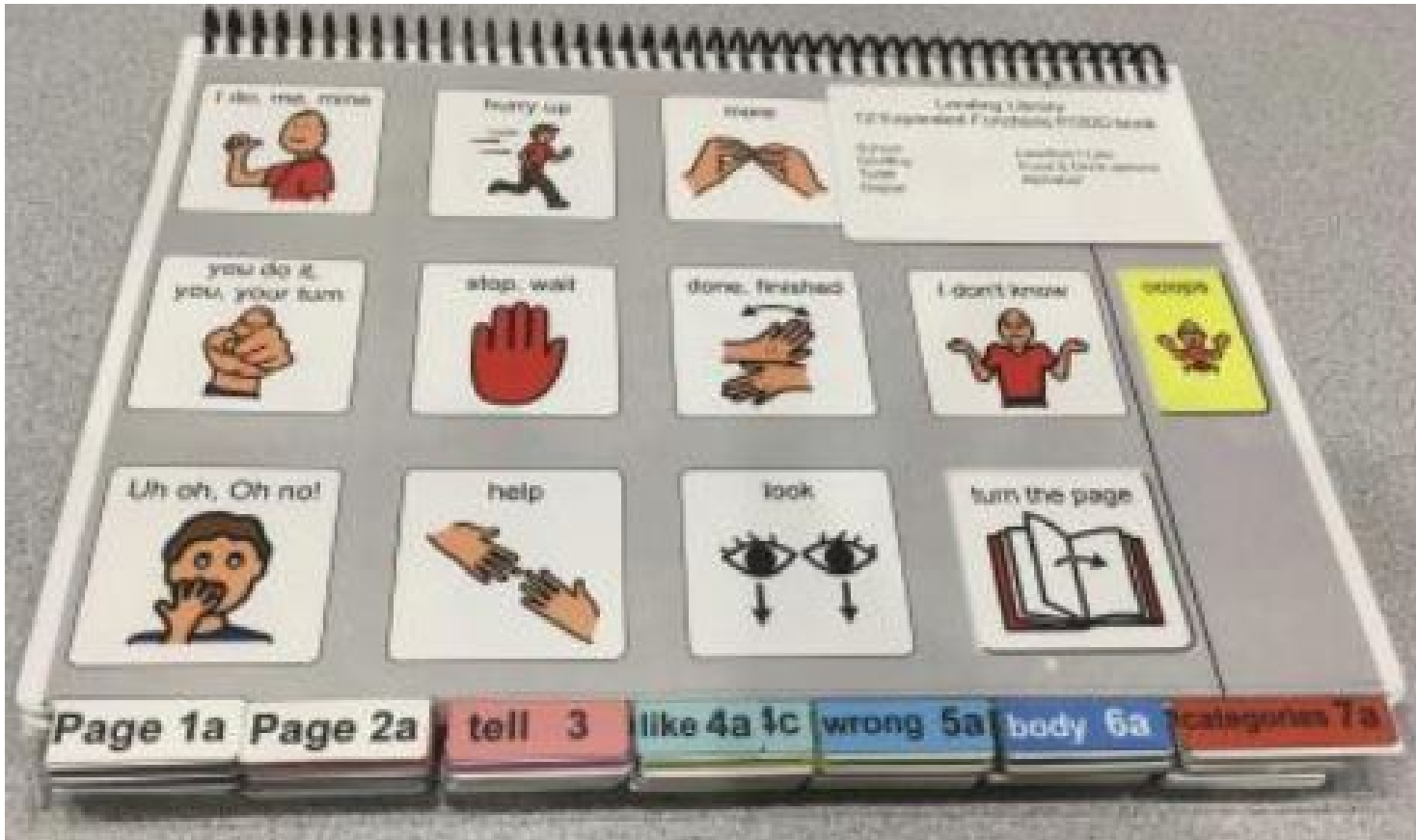







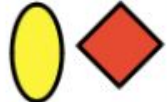

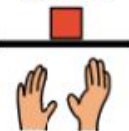

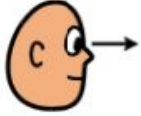








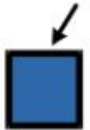


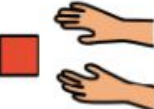


Prepositions/Little Words/Social – Pink (on, please)

Communicating and answering Questions







I, me, my 	do 	help 	play 	where 	different 
you, your 	want 	eat 	look 	what 	no 
Let's 	go 	stop 	turn 	there 	more 
it 	is 	drink 	get 	that 	all done 





Nova Chat



High Tech AAC Devices



Touch Chat



DynaVox

Communicating

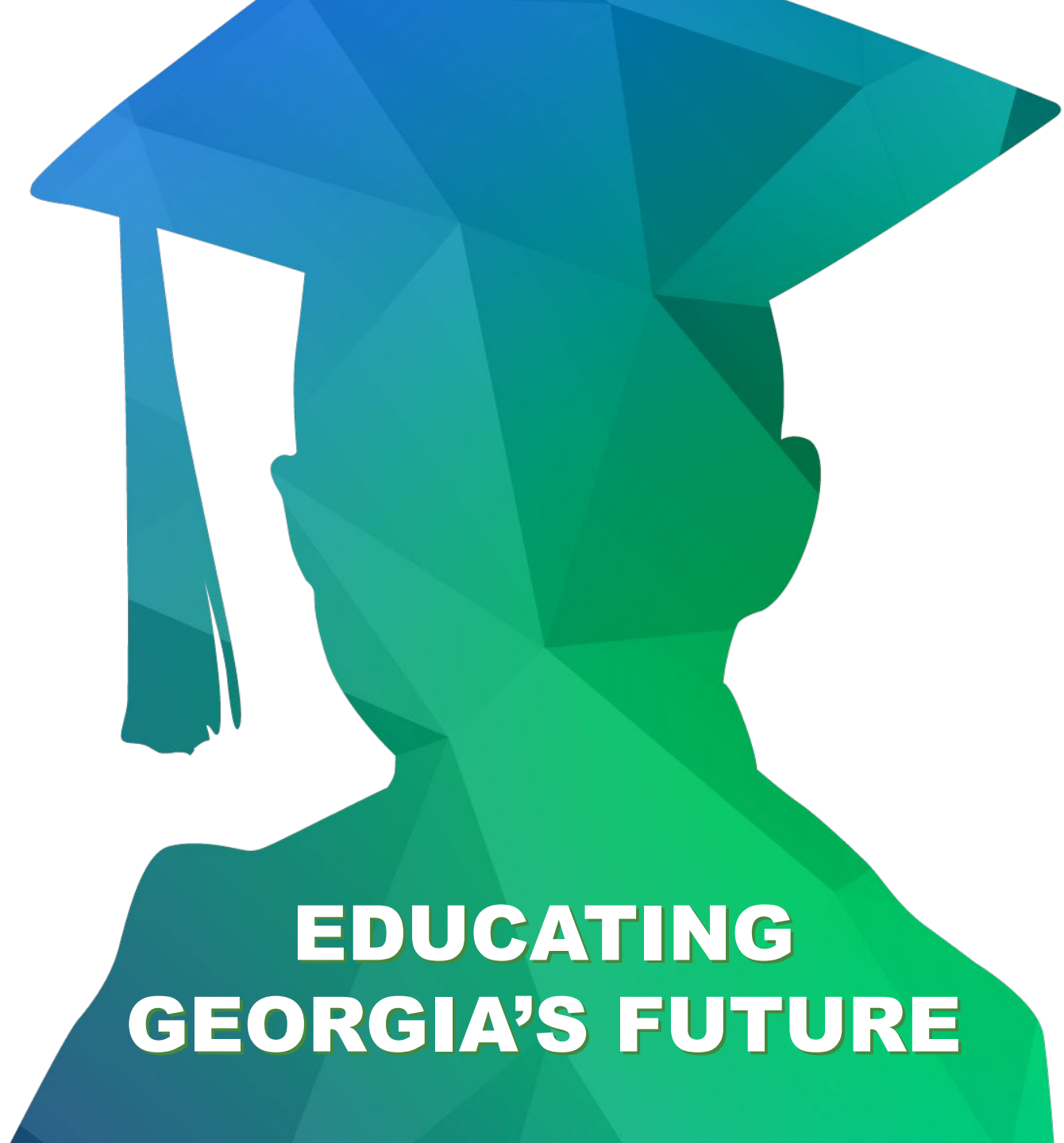


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