



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. 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:

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
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
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

For more information, go to the NJC website at: www.asha.org/njc

Brady, N. C., Bruce, S., Goldman, A., Erickson, K., Mineo, B., Ogletree, B. T., Paul, D., Ronski, M., Sevcik, R., Siegel, E., Schoonover, J., Snell, M., Sylvester, L., & Wilkinson, K. (2016). Communication services and supports for individuals with severe disabilities: Guidance for assessment and intervention. *American Journal on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, 121*(2), 121-138.

This is not an exhaustive or hierarchical list. These are suggestions AAC communication competencies that can be observed for individual's current and future skills. This list can also be used to compare skills over time.

Operational Competency (<i>skills required to use the AAC system</i>)		
<input type="checkbox"/> Attends to AAC system	<input type="checkbox"/> Engages with AAC system	<input type="checkbox"/> Transports AAC system
<input type="checkbox"/> Powers on/off	<input type="checkbox"/> Uses volume key	<input type="checkbox"/> Navigates pages within system
<input type="checkbox"/> Manages SDB	<input type="checkbox"/> Monitors battery charge	<input type="checkbox"/> Participates in vocabulary updates
<input type="checkbox"/> Assists with AAC system positioning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social Competency (<i>social skills that are involved in communication</i>)		
<input type="checkbox"/> Responds to social interactions (non-verbally or verbally)	<input type="checkbox"/> Attends to communication partner	<input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates turn taking
<input type="checkbox"/> Responds to greetings	<input type="checkbox"/> Initiates social interactions	<input type="checkbox"/> Comments
<input type="checkbox"/> Answers questions	<input type="checkbox"/> Asks questions	<input type="checkbox"/> Shares personal information
<input type="checkbox"/> Repairs communication breakdowns	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Linguistic Competency (<i>receptive and expressive language skills that are intended for use on the AAC system</i>)		
<input type="checkbox"/> Communicates with gestures/facial expressions	<input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates intent to communicate	<input type="checkbox"/> Uses single words/symbols/signs
<input type="checkbox"/> Uses 2 words/symbols combination	<input type="checkbox"/> Uses 3+ words/symbols combination	<input type="checkbox"/> Uses a nouns
<input type="checkbox"/> Uses verbs	<input type="checkbox"/> Uses descriptors	<input type="checkbox"/> Has some sight words
<input type="checkbox"/> Uses keyboard for spelling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Strategic Competency (<i>special skills that are unique to AAC-based communication</i>)		
<input type="checkbox"/> Understands communication has an effect	<input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates when message was not understood by communication partner	<input type="checkbox"/> Uses multiple modes of communication to repair message
<input type="checkbox"/> Repeats a misunderstood message	<input type="checkbox"/> Uses clarification strategies	<input type="checkbox"/> Selects appropriate communication mode for situation
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Psychosocial/Emotional Competency (<i>emotional ability to handle communication demands and challenges</i>)		
<input type="checkbox"/> Aware of emotions	<input type="checkbox"/> Uses self-regulation strategies	<input type="checkbox"/> Motivated to communicate
<input type="checkbox"/> Aware AAC is a helpful tool	<input type="checkbox"/> Persists with communication even with breakdowns	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>