

**GUIDE FOR DETERMINING CHARACTERISTICS OF CHILDREN
WHO FUNCTION AS DIFFERENT TYPES OF COMMUNICATORS**

Listed in Developmental Sequence

Adapted from: INSITE

<p>Characteristics of children who may use speech</p>	<p>Auditory Behaviors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Child quiets to voice or gazes at speaker's face -Child attends to sounds (aware of sounds, but may not yet know meanings; stops or appears to listen) -Child recognizes sounds (knows meaning but may not yet be able to locate) -Child locates sounds (turns to, points to, moves to sound source) -Child hears sounds from far away, above, and below -Child hears differences among and understands some home sounds (TV, car) -Child hears and understands differences among vocal sounds (bow-wow, arf-arf) --Child hears differences among and understands distinct speech sounds (bat /cat) 	<p>Communication Behaviors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Child communicates needs with differentiated cries (hunger, pain, discomfort, etc.) -Child makes infant sounds (coos, gurgles, sucking sounds) -Child babbles (repeated sounds/gagagagaga, or double and single syllables / ba ba, or different syllables /ah goo or badaga) -Child vocalizes while looking at or trying to attract an adult's attention -Child vocalizes during play, indicating pleasure -Adult vocalizes, then infant vocalizes in response (turn-taking) -Child imitates vocal sounds -Child adds many consonant sounds to babbling (/t/, /n/, /f/, /d/, etc.) -Child uses jargon (jabber or short sentence-like utterances of sound without meaning) -Child vocalizes emotions (angry or pleasurable sounds) -Child produces single words -Child uses 2+ word combinations (parroting or echolalia may become a problem) 	<p>Environmental Behaviors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Child uses objects to make noises (pounds on surface, bangs objects together) -Child associates sounds with persons, objects, and events -Caregivers give evidence of incorporating elements of meaningful communicative interaction (turn-taking, face-to-face contact, touch) -Caregivers play and interact often with child -Caregivers respond to child's language attempts (reinforce, expand child's language)
<p>Characteristics of children who may use formal signs</p>	<p>Visual Behaviors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Child gazes at face of caregiver -Child focuses on object within 15" -Child notices patterns, brightness, and movement -Child visually tracks objects in motion -Child can see facial expressions and gestures of others -Child's vision is not impaired to the degree that it would interfere with learning through the visual mode 	<p>Communication Behaviors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Child is aware of surroundings (faces and/or voices) -Child pre-babbles (facial expressions, coos, gurgles) -Child babbles or gestures -Child understands single words or signs -Child uses jargon (jabber or short sentence-like utterances or sounds or hand motions without meaning) -Child uses single words or signs -Child understands two word or sign sequences -Child understands 3+ word or sign sequences -Child uses 3+ word or sign sequences 	<p>Environmental Behaviors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Caregivers give evidence of incorporating elements of meaningful communicative interaction (turn-taking, face-to-face, touch) -Caregivers play and interact frequently with child -Caregivers respond to child's language attempts (reinforce, expand the child's language attempts)
<p>Characteristics of children who may use augmentative communication systems</p>	<p>Medical/Physical Status</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Child is at risk for speech (problems in functioning of mouth, breathing, is cognitively disabled, or autistic) -Child has feeding problems (especially beyond 3-7 months of age) -Child has at least one part of the body that 	<p>Communication Behaviors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Child seeks information by touching or groping -Child can attend to a specific object or person (primarily tactilely) for at least 10-15 seconds (holds onto mother or object) -Child knows that objects exist even when out of sight (e.g., does not cry when mother leaves because knows mother will return) -Child knows the meaning of a few objects (primarily tactilely) such as 	<p>Environmental Behaviors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Parents are supportive of using communication aids <p>Visual Behaviors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Child can discriminate simple pictures of common objects and events no larger

	<p>can respond consistently</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Child's motor or neurological problems make it extremely difficult for him or her to imitate or spontaneously produce a formal sign 	<p>a bottle, toy, and blanket</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Child shows some interest in changes in the environment -Child has a sense of control over the environment (by doing something, something will happen) -Child can discriminate between yes and no (e.g., head nod or shake) -Child can understand some symbols (auditorily, tactilely, visually) -Child does not attempt to imitate formal signs that parents help him or her make -Child does not attempt to make formal signs on his or her own -Child has a sense of sequencing of events (e.g., first sock goes on, then shoe) 	<p>than six inches in diameter (when shown a simple drawing of a cup, will look at a real cup)</p> <p>NOTE: It is possible to obtain communication boards that have very large pictures or concrete tactile representations for children with very limited vision, however, these boards are somewhat limited in their usefulness.</p>
<p>Characteristics of children who may use formal coactive signs</p>	<p>Motor Behaviors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Child has some degree of voluntary motor control of at least one hand -Child has a range of voluntary motion with at least one arm -Child is not tactilely defensive (does not resist parent touching child or helping child make hand motions) -Child is capable of moving at least one hand into different hand positions 	<p>Communication Behaviors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Child can attend to a specific object or person (primarily tactilely) for at least 10-15 seconds -Child uses gestures for communication purposes -Child is capable of discriminating different communicative gestures used by others (primarily tactilely) -Child willingly allows parents to form signs on child's hand -Child can discriminate different signs parents help form on his hands -Child attempts to imitate signs that parents help form on her hands -Child makes signs on his or her own for his intentions and the objects and actions that he or she experiences -Child is capable of generalizing the use of some signs into a variety of situations, people, times -Child realizes signs exist for objects, actions, etc., experienced by others (signs made by child's hand on or near other person's body) -Child understands signs used by others and responds in sign or with appropriate behavior 	<p>Environmental Behaviors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Caregivers are responsive to the use of formal signs and use them consistently
<p>Characteristics of children who may use informal communication</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Child shows little or no attempt to interact with people -Child shows little or no attempt to interact with nearby objects or people, even when they have deliberately been made accessible -Child does not appear to be interested in exploring the space around him or her, physically, or within limits if available vision and hearing -Child shows little or no change in behavior as a result of changes in his environment (auditory, visual, social, etc) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Child has been diagnosed to have severe deficits in vision and hearing -Child has a medical diagnosis of low cognitive ability in addition to a visual and/or auditory deficit -Child has motor impairments, in addition to vision and/or hearing impairments, that significantly restrict his voluntary responses -Child's motor impairments in combination with his or her visual and/or auditory impairments prevent speech from developing normally. -Child demonstrates self-stimulatory behaviors to the degree that he shows little or no interest in the environment -Child shows repeated defensiveness and/or irritability when approached or picked up by people or when given objects with different textures or temperatures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Child has no way of indicating wants, other than crying or fussing -Child demonstrates one or more signals in connection with same activity or person (attempts to communicate) -Child is willing to be moved coactively (allows someone to help him or hear make a hand or body motion) -Child does not attempt to imitate formal signs that parent help child make -Child does not attempt to make formal signs on his own