

### Choosing Messages to Record into a Communication Device

Messages that enhance participation are messages that provide that communicator with social contact that is motivating and rewarding. It's a simple rule of thumb: Select messages that make a difference. Thus, messages that say "Check this out, I got a new game for my birthday." "What do you think about the World Series?" "I'd like to take a look at that," or "That was a great concert!" will be more likely to enhance participation than a request to go to the bathroom or put on a coat.

*As you make a list of messages to record:*

- Remember to listen closely to what typical peers are saying and doing in these situations.*
- Consider new settings and new experiences where the communicator may be motivated to participate.*
- Keep in mind that the communicator does not have to be able to complete a task independently to be meaningfully involved.*
- Don't make assumptions about what the communicator may or may not find motivating. A "Hi" from a peer in the hallway may be very motivating even though it may not appear to be to a casual observer.*

#### General

- Listen to items in "To Do List" one at a time
- Present the steps to follow in a recipe
- Order food ("I want hamburger", "I want onion rings", "I want coffee with sugar")
- Greet people in a variety of ways ("Hi", "TGIF", "How are you doing?")...
- Make a grocery list
- Cheer for favorite team ("Go Twins, Twins rule!")
- Tell a joke
- Share an event
- Recite a poem
- Share a message over the telephone with a friend or family member.
- Give personal information (name, address, phone number)
- Share emotions/feelings

#### Vocational

- "I need more work to do."
- Follow the sequence to follow a job
- Request a break
- Deliver a sales pitch

#### Medical

- I need to be suctioned.
- I need to cough.
- I am in pain.
- I want medicine.
- It hurts.
- Please move the bed up/down.

### Message Ideas at School:

#### Early Childhood

- Give simple instructions to create a tower, then knock it down
- Speak lines in a puppet show
- Play a game (“Duck-Duck”, “Red Rover”, “Simon Says”)
- Play house (“First get the baby ready,” “Now...”)
- Choose a song verse (“Let’s sing about the baby on the bus”, “Now about the wheels”)

#### Elementary School

- Present Spelling words one at a time
- Take turns reading a book
- Give directions to others for a craft project
- Take attendance (“Is John here?”, “Is...”)
- Give numbers for classmates to add, subtract, multiply, divide
- Report on field trips (“First we...”, “Next we...”)

#### High School

- Read lines in a play
- Conduct an interview one question at a time
- Announce the starting line up at a sporting event
- Sell items at your school store (“Candy is \$0.75”, “Pencils are...”)
- Present test questions one at a time

#### Circle Time

- Tell the weather
- Answer the roll
- Tell the day of the week, month, year
- Tell the lunch menu
- Relate an event from home
- Signal beginning and end of group activity

#### Music Time

- Introduce song selections
- Sing a repetitive line
- Choose the song
- Play instrument sounds
- Add sound effects to song

#### Story Time

- Say repetitive story line
- Tell when it’s time to “turn page”
- Select story to be read
- Add sound effects to story

#### Lunch Time

- Request food item or napkin
- Request help
- Comment on the food

#### Around School

- Greeter (hello, how are you, good morning)
- Comments (“Don’t run in the halls”, “You’re late”, “Better hurry”, “You look cute”, etc.)
- Directing visitors (“The meeting is in the library down this hall”, etc.)

#### Office Helper

- Announce birthdays over the intercom
- Welcome visitors to the office
- Deliver messages
- Welcome/Thank IEP conference participants