

**The Communication Matrix:  
How it is Used to Assess and Support  
Children with Multiple Disabilities  
who are Non-Verbal**

**Part 1**

4-5:30 PM

November 16, 2010



**PRESENTER: KATHEE SCOGGIN**

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If you had **no way** of communicating with people so they could understand you and you could understand them...



**How would your life be different?**

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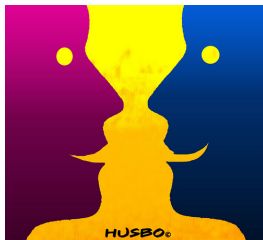
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When most of us think of communication, we think of this...



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Let's see some other ways people communicate

Typing or sending emails



Texting



Writing

Gestures



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Facial expressions and body language



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Using an object (three dimensional item)



Body language



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So many of our individual communication systems look like this

The percentage of time we use each type of communication may be different and it will differ depending on our environment and other things

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This is no different from our students who are non-verbal!

*Really?!*

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So here is what it looks like for some of our children who are non-verbal

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### Using an augmentative communication device



OR...

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### Tactile Symbols



OR...

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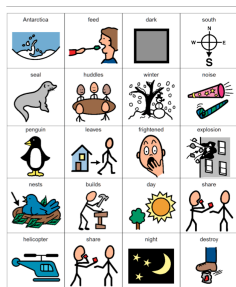
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### Picture Symbols



OR...

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### Tactile Signing



OR...

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### Pictures and Signing



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### Eye Gaze



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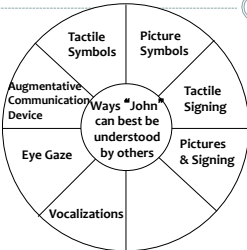
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Many children who are non-verbal **might** have communication systems that have some of these elements, not all.



The percentage of time a child who is non-verbal uses each type of communication may be different and it will differ depending on his or her environment and other things

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So, now we know where we want the child to be...

However, he is not communicating in any of those ways!

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Often we are expected to read the other person's mind!



After all, this person is non-verbal

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### Let's start at the very beginning...



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### What do you want to know about the student's communication?

- a. I want to have a test score
- b. I want to demonstrate that the student is non-verbal
- c. I have used a specific protocol before and know how to do the assessment
- d. I want to find out where to start on assisting this student to develop higher level communication skills so people can understand her.

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**Communication Matrix**

**A communication skill assessment**

- An individualized, comprehensive measure of communication development
- Includes a checklist with the results of communication including frequency of communication and functional forms

Charley Rowland, Ph.D.  
© 1998, 2004

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4 Reasons Communication Matrix Summary																				
	Refuse			Obtain				Social			Information									
Pre-Intentional Behavior	(1)			(1)				(1)	Type of Symbol For levels V, VI, VII: specify types of symbols used ( e.g., picture, symbols, 3-dimensional symbols, manual signs, speech)											
Intentional Behavior	(2)	(2)	(3)				(2)													
Unconventional Communication	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(3)	(4)												
Conventional Communication	(4)							(5)							(6)	(7)	(8)	(1)	(2)	
Concrete Symbols	(5)																		(3)	(4)
Abstract Symbols	(6)																			
Language	(7)																			

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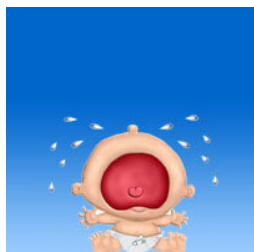
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### 1. REFUSAL OR REJECTION

Can you tell when your child is uncomfortable (in pain, wet, hungry, startled?)

If yes, what does your child do to make you think he's uncomfortable?




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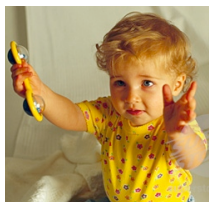
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### OBTAIN OR GET



Does your child intentionally indicate that he wants you to perform a new action (one that you have just not been engaged in)?

If yes, how does your child request (or command) a new action?

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### SOCIAL INTERACTIONS



Does your child intentionally direct your attention to something that she is interested in (as if saying “look at that”)?



If yes, how does your child direct your attention to something?

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### PROVIDE OR SEEK INFORMATION

Does your child spontaneously (without being asked) provide information to you about things in the form of comments (“that’s pretty”, “hot”, etc.?) If yes, how does your child make a comment?



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#### Levels:

Communication Matrix

- I Pre-intentional behavior
- II Intentional behavior
- III Unconventional communication
- IV Conventional communication
- V Concrete symbols
- VI Abstract symbols
- VII Language

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7 Levels Communication Matrix Summary																
	Refuse	Obtain						Social		Information						
Pre-Intentional Behavior	(1)	(1)						(1)		Type of Symbol For levels V, VI, VII, specify types of symbols used ( e.g., picture, symbols, 3-dimensional symbols, manual signs, speech)						
Intentional Behavior	(2)	(2)	(3)				(2)									
Unconventional Communication	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(3)	(4)								
Conventional Communication	(4)						(5)	(6)	(7)					(8)	(1)	(2)
Concrete Symbols	(5)														(3)	(4)
Abstract Symbols	(6)															
Language	(7)															

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## What is the difference between pre-intentional and intentional behavior?

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Communication Matrix Summary															
	Refuse	Obtain						Social		Information					
Pre-Intentional Behavior	(1)	(1)						(1)		Type of Symbol For levels V, VI, VII, specify types of symbols used ( e.g., picture, symbols, 3-dimensional symbols, manual signs, speech)					
Intentional Behavior	(2)	(2)	(3)				(2)								
Unconventional Communication															
Conventional Communication															
Concrete Symbols															
Abstract Symbols															
Language															

Charity Rowland, 2004 www.designtolearn.com

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**Behaviors that can lead to predictable communication**


**Changes in posture**

- Stiffen
- Twist
- Turn away
- Relax



**Limb movements**

- Kicks legs
- Bat arms
- Stamp
- Kick
- Takes desired item




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**Head movements**

- Turn head away or to side
- Pull back head
- Bobs head
- Moves head forward
- Moves head toward desired item or person
- Nods head
- Shakes head "no"



**Body movement**

- Moves away from person or object
- Pushes away person/object
- Gives unwanted item to you
- Approaches desired object
- Lunge
- Bounce
- Shrugs shoulders
- Hugs or kisses
- Pats someone




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**Hand movements**

- Guides your hand or pulls you over to the desired item
- Touches desired object or person without taking it
- Reaches toward or taps object or person;
- Takes your hand
- Gives you or shows you something
- Beckons you to come
- Holds out hand with open palm
- Points at desired object
- Takes your hand
- Raises or waves hand (for attention)
- Pantomimes action or object
- Activates mechanical "calling device"
- Waves "hi" and "bye"
- Raises hand




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**Eye movements**  
Looks at desired item or person  
Gazes back and forth between you and desired object



**Facial expressions**  
Grimace  
Frown  
Smile  
Sticks out tongue

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**Vocalizations**  
Cry  
Grunt  
Scream  
Whine  
Fuss  
Coo  
Squeal  
Specific intonated vocalizations "uh-uh"  
Mimics sound of desired object/action



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**Photo / Picture symbol / Object symbol**  
One  
Two  
More than two



**Abstract symbol**  
Abstract 2 dimensional symbol  
Abstract 3 dimensional symbol

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<p><b>Spoken word</b></p> <p>One Two More than two</p> 	 <p><b>Manual sign</b></p> <p>One Two More than two</p>
<p><b>Written word</b></p> <p>One Two More than two</p> 	<p><b>Brailled word</b></p> <p>One Two More than two</p> 

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Communication Matrix Summary												
	Refuse			Obtain				Social			Information	
Pre-Intentional Behavior	[Empty]											
Intentional Behavior	[Empty]											
Unconventional Communication	[Empty]											
Conventional Communication	[Empty]											
Concrete Symbols	(5)										(3)	(4)
Abstract Symbols	(6)											
Language	[Empty]											

Charity Rowland, 2004 www.designtolearn.com

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Communication Matrix Summary														
	Refuse			Obtain				Social			Information			
Pre-Intentional Behavior	(1)			(1)				(1)	[Empty]					
Intentional Behavior	(2)	(2)	(3)					(2)	[Empty]					
Unconventional Communication	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(3)	(4)	[Empty]					
Conventional Communication	(4)								(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(1)	(2)
Concrete Symbols	(5)												(3)	(4)
Abstract Symbols	(6)	[Empty]												
Language	(7)	[Empty]												

Charity Rowland, 2004 www.designtolearn.com

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## HOMEWORK

Using a highlighter pen, fill in the boxes that the child does.

If that behavior is just emerging in the child, make a dotted diagonal line across the box

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I need two participants who are willing for the results on their student's *Communication Matrix* to be used in the next training session. If you are willing, email me at [kscogginwsds@gmail.com](mailto:kscogginwsds@gmail.com) no later than November 18, 2010.

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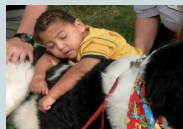
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## Part 2 of Three-part Training:

**Part 2: The Communication Matrix:**  
How it is Used to Assess and Support Children with Multiple Disabilities who are Non-Verbal

4:00 – 5:30 PM  
Tuesday, Nov. 30, 2010



[www.wsdsonline.org/deafblind](http://www.wsdsonline.org/deafblind)

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## Communication System

**BODY LANGUAGE AND FACIAL EXPRESSION:** physical representation to internal (emotional or mental) reactions, maybe done purposefully towards another or maybe just a reaction

**VOCALIZATIONS:** sounds made intentionally which may or may not be directed towards someone else

**GESTURES:** use of motions of the limbs or body as a means of expression socially recognized

**TOUCH CUES:** physical contact directly onto the individuals body immediately preceding an action or activity, the purpose is conveying a message (receptive communication) to the individual (not to get their attention)

**OBJECT CUES:** an object from a part of their daily routine, presented to the individual as a message about a specific activity.

**TWO & THREE-DIMENSIONAL TANGIBLE SYMBOLS:** a photo, line drawing or object/ part of object or texture that bears a meaningful and realistic connection to what it is representing.

**WRITTEN WORD (print/Braille):** combination of abstract symbolic shapes to have socially agreed upon meaning

**SIGN LANGUAGE:** a system of articulated hand gestures following specific grammatical rules or syntax

**SPOKEN LANGUAGE:** meaningful sound as produced by the action of the vocal organs following specific grammatical rules or syntax

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