Trainer's Guide

For Module: **Communications Strategies**

—

Table of Contents:

A Letter to Our Trainers

—

Dear DSI Master Trainer,

Greetings, we are so glad you are here! Your experience and leadership are so important as we begin this Training of Trainers module focused on 'Communication Strategies.' Thank you so much for your continued dedication to this process and training work with us. We are very excited for this module because we know how important this topic is to you and for so many of the teachers and children you work with.

Before we start with the training, let's review our overall goals and values. These principles were key to creating the training model and content itself, and we hope that you will work to pass them on too. At DSI and as part of this training, we believe that:

- Disability rights are human rights.
- Children with disabilities have the right to learn and are able to learn.
- People with disabilities are important members of society.
- Local changemakers are integral to creating positive and lasting change.

Please always remember to have an open mind to continue learning and improving your professional skills, keep sharing your passion for this work, and have confidence in yourself as a trainer as you continue growing and helping others to grow too. We believe in you, we are here to help you, and your work has great impact!

A sense of possibility and inclusivity starts with you. Thank you again for being an important part of this mission work with us.

With gratitude,
The DSI Team

Online access to training materials and resources!
← Scan to go to our training webpage to get digital copies of training materials and resources: www.ds-international.org/training. Remember, you need your password!

About this Module

—

Learning goals

The module's **main goals** are to:

- Learn to think critically about what communication is and its purpose.
- Be able to apply skills and knowledge to plan and respond effectively to help children with disabilities who have communication challenges to be included and successful in the school and other environments.

Content included in this module:	

• What is communication?
• Assessing abilities and needs
• Specific types of expressive communication difficulties
• Strategies for encouraging expressive communication
	• 4 types of expressive difficulties included:
	  ○ Nonverbal
	  ○ Has a few words
	  ○ Unintelligible
	  ○ Social communication skills

The **main objectives** of this module are building knowledge, skills, and abilities to:

- Understand what communication is, including nonverbal communication and speech
- Think critically about assessing different types of expressive communication difficulties including children who are nonverbal, have few words, are unintelligible, and social communication skills needs
- Learn strategies to use to help children improve their expressive communication skills

We will know that trainees have gained this information and skills by:

- Comparing survey information gathered before and after the training session(s)
- Observing and talking to trainees working with children with disabilities

Before, during and after the training

Before the training:

- Communicate and plan with your identified trainee group.
- Collect information about your trainee's prior knowledge and skills about this content module

- Learn about any accommodations needed for trainees so you can make sure to create an accessible and inclusive training space!
- Review your plan and the training content.
- Gather all training materials needed for you and all participants. The flipbook and all toolkit resources may be copied and shared with trainees. Copies of the slides may also be shared.

On training days:

At the start:

- Take attendance.
- Welcome participants. Take time for introductions, a welcome activity or game, set the schedule and group training agreements.

Throughout the training time:

- Make sure trainees are included, understand and are able to access all parts of the training.
- Encourage trainees to share examples, ask questions, and think about ways they will implement what they are learning.

As the training concludes:

- Encourage trainees to plan for how they will use the training information.
- Get feedback from trainees about the training.

After the training:

Within 1 week of completing the training:

- Complete the 'Tell us about your training work!' online form. Please complete this form every time you carry out a training, using part or all of this module.

Tell us about your training work!
← Scan to go to the form now or access at: www.tinyurl.com/3rvkawmh

3-12 months after the training:

- Monitor and support trainees to encourage and track their professional growth.
- Report back to DSI to help with ongoing monitoring and evaluation, to give feedback, and to help us plan future training and support for you and others.

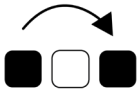
About the materials

This module contains three parts:

1. The Trainer's Guide (this resource)
2. The Slides
3. The Toolkit

The Trainer's Guide (this resource): This resource provides key information about the content of this module to assist you, the Master Trainer, as you train other teachers.

The Slides: The corresponding slide deck that can be used alongside the content information in this guide during training (as technology allows). This icon key is used in the slides and trainer's guide to help explain the content and training activities:

Icon Key				
Key Message 	Group Activity 	Think & Share 	Toolkit Resource 	Optional Activity 

The Toolkit: The toolkit contains highly tangible, user-friendly, quick access resources to supplement the training and support trainers and trainees who are putting the training into practice. All toolkit resources may be copied and shared to raise awareness and help others learn more too!

This modules toolkit contains:

1. The Flipbook
2. Communication Strategies for Children who are Nonverbal
3. Communication Strategies for Children who have Few Words
4. Communication Strategies for Children who are Unintelligible
5. Communication Strategies for Improving Social Communication Skills

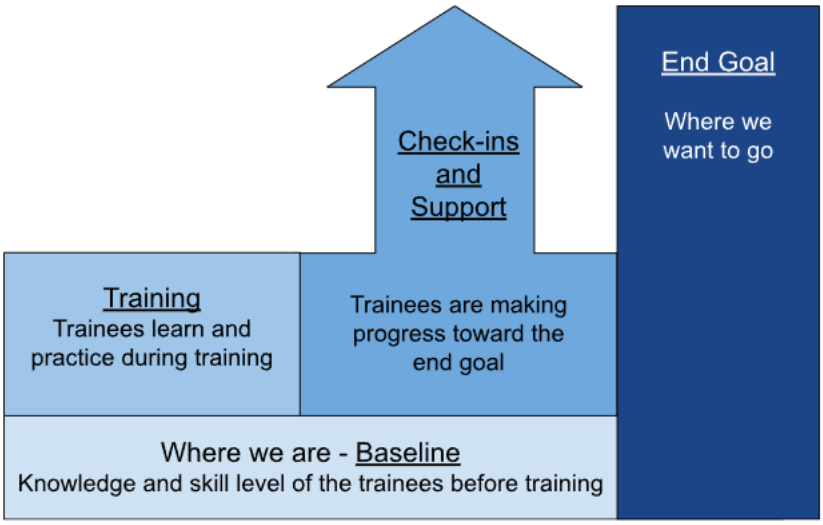
*See the section on 'Slides Information' and 'Toolkit Information' for more details.

Monitoring and supporting trainees

Evaluation is an important aspect of any activity. In the classroom, teachers use many tools and activities to check for understanding and evaluate a student's progress. DSI has developed tools and activities that are used to evaluate different aspects of the training program. As a Master Trainer, we will ask for your input at different times (using tools including surveys and check-in questions). Your input helps us continue learning and planning future trainings, gather information to seek funding to continue and grow this work together, and know how to best support you and others.

Evaluation tools and activities are not tests and your individual honest answers are important. If things are going well, we want to know that! If things are not going well, that is important information for us to know too, so we know how to respond in the short term and better prepare for the future. The purpose is to understand where we want to go (end goals) and where we are now (baseline) so we can plan how to reach our goals. We know that, like students, all professionals need practice, and ongoing support to continue growing in their knowledge, skills, and abilities.

The Evaluation Process:



We want to help you support your teacher trainees and monitor their progress and professional development as well. Specific monitoring and evaluation tools (as well as information about who uses these tools, how, and when) have been drafted by the DSI team. As a Master Trainer team, we will continue to plan for this and share these resources in addition to this Trainer's Guide. If you or your organization feel ready and would like more information about this at any point, please let us know.

Slides Information

—

How to use this section: This section contains key information to share with trainees while using the module slides, including the main focus, key points, and directions for training activities.

Welcome Activities

Main focus: Welcome trainees and set expectations (slides #1-5).

Possible welcome activities:

- Complete the pre-training survey, if not completed prior to training day (required)
- Do introductions, and a welcome activity or game.
- Set group agreements.
- Review the training goals, expectations, and content that will be covered.

Slide #4 - Purpose of the training

- Review the key information on this slide with trainees including the 3 key goals of this (and all) DSI trainings and the 2 important reminders.
- *This same slide and information is included at the start of Section 3, as a reminder.

Section 1: Foundations of communication

Section topics:

1. What is communication?
2. Communication development
3. Assessing abilities and needs

Section overview: The first half of this training module focuses on foundational information about communication. **It may be tempting to skip this part, because we want to quickly find strategies to help fix communication problems, but this part is very important!** We need to know important information about how communication develops, especially before a person is ready to speak, so we can properly analyze what may be happening and how best to help.

Section 1 key messages:

- People must understand language before they can speak

- Speaking is the FINAL developmental stage of 'talking' - not the first.
- Nonverbal communication methods are used very often, even once a person speaks. Ex: gestures, tone of voice, body language, and facial expressions.
- Even if someone does not speak or speak clearly, they can still: be smart, understand others, and learn information and skills (including ways to communicate)!

What is communication?

Slide #7 - Think and Share (in pairs) - *How do you define communication? And what are some examples of ways communication happens?*

- In pairs, discuss the two questions. Then take turns sharing back some discussion points with the whole group.

Slide #8 - Flipbook page - *Communication is…*

- Review page 1 of the flipbook. Highlight explanations that relate that came up in the 'Think and Share' activity already.

<u>Key points</u> (slide #9)

- Explain that communication happens in 2 ways: Nonverbal and verbal.
- Review specific methods of nonverbal communication, providing demonstrations and examples as appropriate).

Communication development

<u>Key points</u> (slides #10-15)

- Communication is developed step by step. Review each of the individual development steps as outlined here by using 'The Communication Pyramid'.
    1. Foundation skills - key skills that must be developed first to built upon.
    2. Understanding - understanding others nonverbal and verbal communication.
    3. Expressing - nonverbal ways of expressing yourself.
    4. Speech - the last step of communication to develop. This is the ability to speak verbally.

Slide #14 - Group Activity - *Express a message*

- The goal of this activity is for trainees to focus on using and identifying nonverbal ways of expressing themselves.

- Working in pairs, have one partner express a message without using spoken or written language and the other partner try to understand.
    - Message ideas for trainees (or trainees can use their own idea): I'm hungry, Where's the bathroom? I need help, I'm sick and need medical care, I like your outfit, Do you want to play? Let's take turns, Tell me about your family!
- Once everyone has had time to practice, discuss the experience together. Share answers to the questions and talk about what it felt like to try to send and receive messages like this.

Slides #16-17 - Flipbook page statements - *Communication differences…*

- Review key statements included in the flipbook about typical and abnormal communication development. Emphasize that understanding and speaking are different types of communication. Add further explanation and focus as appropriate for your trainees.

Slide #18 - Think and Share - *Identify a child who has difficulty with communication…*

- *First, give time for trainees to individually think about both questions 1 and 2. Then they can discuss in pairs or small groups.*

Assessing abilities and needs

Key points (slides #19-20)

- These slides address a series of questions for the participants to consider when determining whether or not a child may have a communication difficulty or if there are other things to consider first in what they are able to understand. In order for children to respond appropriately, we need to make sure they are able to understand the information that is being sent to them.
- At the end of slide 20, discuss how children tend to struggle with the language adults use sometimes as it is not the literal language, but the use of metaphors, idioms and other ways of speaking that have different meanings.

Key points (slides #21-23)

- These slides are intended to give participants questions to ask and things to consider in determining whether a child has an expressive communication difficulty.

Group Activity - Slide 24 - Assessment tool learning and practice time

- If and when any assessment tools are available, this slide and activity is meant as a time to allow explanation, exploration, and learning.

Slide #25 - Section 1 key messages:

- People must understand language before they can speak
- Speaking is the FINAL developmental stage of 'talking' - not the first.
- Nonverbal communication methods are used very often, even once a person speaks. Ex: gestures, tone of voice, body language, and facial expressions.
- Even if someone does not speak or speak clearly, they can still: be smart, understand others, and learn information and skills (including ways to communicate)!

Section 2: Types of expressive communication difficulties

Section overview: Different children with disabilities have different types of challenges with their communication abilities and struggles. It is important for us to take time to understand the different types of communication difficulties a child might experience.

Section 2 key messages:

- Nonverbal - does not speak words to effectively communicate at this time
- Few words - uses only a few words
- Unintelligible - is able to speak, but are not easily understood by others
- Social communication skills - can speak and is easy to understand but does not usually direct their communication towards a person in an appropriate and expected manner

Nonverbal and Few Words

<u>Key points</u> (slides #28-31)

- Review the descriptions of the first two types of difficulties (nonverbal and few words).
- Show the corresponding videos and point out how the definitions are demonstrated in the video.
- Be sure that participants understand that each difficulty may look slightly different from one child to the next.

Unintelligible

Key points (slides #32-34)

- Review the definitions and videos similar to above. Have participants review the toolkit sheet for Unintelligible when addressing slide 33.
- Be sure that participants understand that each difficulty may look slightly different from one child to the next.

Slide #35 - Group Activity - *Say these sounds*

- The goal of this activity is for the participants to say different sounds and recognize which parts of their body are used in making different sounds and how. The idea is that they can better understand if a child might have one or more difficulty in producing a sound due to a weakness in that area.
- First model with sound /m/. Give the sound. Then have all of the participants do the sound. Tell the participants that the lips are touching and maybe slightly curved in. My teeth are not touching, my tongue is not involved in the sound and is resting on the bottom of my mouth, and I am using breath with my voice.
- For the next sound, use /t/. Give the sound and have all the participants make the sound. Tell the participants that the jaw is slightly open and lips are separated. The tongue starts at the back of the upper teeth and then moves into the mouth. The breath is used but the voice is not.
- Then have the group try with different sounds of different letters. Be sure that participants do not do the name of a letter, but rather the sound.

Social Communication Skills

Key points (slides #36-37)

- Review definitions and videos as before.
- Be sure that participants understand that each difficulty may look slightly different from one child to the next.
- Explain that young children and especially those with disabilities have more difficulty understanding things such as idioms, metaphors, and sarcasm.
- Common confusions - In English
    - Words that do not have realistic or literal meanings (idioms, metaphors etc..) For example: It's raining cats and dogs, she has a heart of gold.
    - Sarcasm. For example: When you expect something to happen and say 'wow, what a surprise'

- Invisible social norms. For example: Taking turns while talking, eye contact
- Common confusions - In Khmer
  - Identify and discuss common confusions in Khmer including slang, word play, and words and phrases that do not have realistic or literal meaning.

Slide #38 - Think and Share - *The hidden rules in communication*

- Explain that these 'hidden' rules (and other social skills) may need to be directly taught. Do not assume that someone is being rude or disrespectful on purpose. Perhaps they do not know.
- Review (using slide #37) or share more examples as needed to help build understanding.

Slide #39 - Group Activity - *Identify the type of communication difficulty*

- The goal for this activity is for the participants to identify which type of communication difficulty is present in the video. Offer further explanations about how examples show key struggles of the specific type, and remind trainees that there could be more than one difficulty present at the same time.

Slide #40 - Section 2 key messages:

- Nonverbal - does not speak words to effectively communicate at this time
- Few words - uses only a few words
- Unintelligible - is able to speak, but are not easily understood by others
- Social communication skills - can speak and is easy to understand but does not usually direct their communication towards a person in an appropriate and expected manner

Section 3: Strategies to improve expressive communication

Section topics:

1. Using strategies
2. Specific strategies

Section overview: This section of the training provides many best-practice strategies used to help important expressive language and **is meant to provide a lot of time for trainees to do hands-on practice of the strategies**, using the toolkit pages.

Many of the strategies are used, even if children have different types of communication struggles. The way the strategy is used may be slightly different depending on the individual's

needs or level of ability. Below in this section you will find an explanation of each strategy included and also information and examples of how to use the strategy for the different types of expressive communication difficulties learned about in Section 2.

Slide #42 - Purpose of the training

- Review the key information on this slide with trainees, including the 3 key goals of this (and all) DSI trainings and the 2 key reminders.
- *This is the same slide and information that is included at the start of Section 1. Review with trainees as a reminder as you begin this section.

Section 3 key messages:

- All strategies discussed can be modified and used with ANY child who has any combination of expressive communication challenges.
- It is up to you as the teacher to adjust the strategies to meet the individual child's needs.
- It is best to choose 1-2 strategies to focus on at a time that will be most beneficial to their everyday life.
- Be consistent, patient and positive - giving the child time to learn and practice using the strategy.

Using strategies

Key points (slide #44)

- Review the titles of strategies on slide 44. This list will be referenced again and again during this section of training.
- **All specific strategy slides contain a '→ Go to Strategies List' button that will bring you back to this slide.

Key points (slide #45)

- Review the following key messages that are included in the flipbook:
  - Strategies can focus on helping the child learn a different way that they can communicate their wants and needs.
  - Other strategies can focus on encouraging the child to practice using their voice more in a fun way and motivating way.
  - With more time and practice, some children begin to talk, but not all children with disabilities will be able to learn to speak. Remember, sometimes there are factors we cannot control.

Slides #46-47 - Group Activity - *Strategy Practice!*

- These slides are meant to explain the general process used throughout Section 3, in two steps.
  - Step 1 - Beginning on Slide #44, you will choose a strategy and click to go to the specific slide. Take time explaining the strategy, providing examples and demonstration as appropriate.
  - Step 2 - Then trainees will follow the instructions (on Slide #47) to take turns practicing being a child with a specific type of expressive communication difficulty and teacher using the strategy to help.
  - Help offer encouragement and clarifications throughout this time to build understanding and proper use of the strategy.

Specific strategies

Key points (slide #48-72)

- These slides provide key information on the individual strategies included in this module and on the toolkit pages.
- **Additional information for you as the trainer is available below in the chart.

Strategies list:

1. Create a situation
2. Spotlight words
3. Out of reach
4. Ask for more
5. Sign language
6. Visuals
7. Wait time
8. Make comments
9. Talk out loud
10. Two choices
11. Verbal routines
12. Add a word
13. Sing
14. Demonstrate movements
15. Strengthen the mouth
16. Start with easier sounds
17. Imitate sounds
18. Practice a specific sound
19. Practice small words
20. Tone of voice
21. Eye gaze
22. Facial expressions
23. Gestures

Slide #73 - Section 3 key messages:

- All strategies discussed can be modified and used with ANY child who has any combination of expressive communication challenges.
- It is up to you as the teacher to adjust the strategies to meet the individual child's needs.

- It is best to choose 1-2 strategies to focus on at a time, that will be most beneficial to their everyday life.
- Be consistent, patient and positive - giving the child time to learn and practice using the strategy.

Closing Activities

Main focus: Review and close the training session. Thank and encourage trainees (slides #74-77).

Possible closing activities:

- Toolkit pages review
- Flipbook review
- Talk about why this work is worth the effort
- Create action plans for implementation, follow up, etc.
- Answer questions or collect information regarding follow up needs
- Complete immediate post-training survey (required)

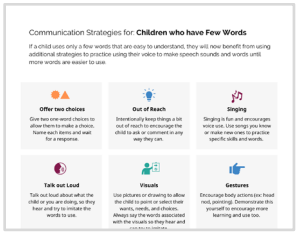
Toolkit Information

Flipbook

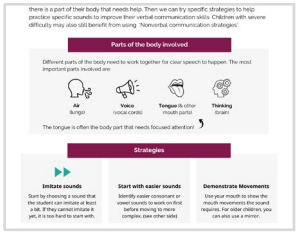
The Flipbook is an awareness-raising tool that shares important key messages about this module's content. This is a good introduction to the content, especially for new teachers and others (including parents) who are just beginning to learn about these concepts.

Toolkit Pages

Communication Strategies for Children who are Nonverbal provides two sections of key strategies. One side focuses on strategies to help children use nonverbal communication. The other side focuses on strategies to encourage verbal skills to develop.



Communication Strategies for Children who have Few Words provides a menu of key strategies that commonly help children with only a few words to practice using their voice to make speech sounds and words until more words are easier to use.



Communication Strategies for Children who are Unintelligible provides important overview information about what body parts are involved in producing clear speech and a menu of key strategies that commonly help children work on developing clearer speech.

Communication Strategies for Improving Social Communication Skills shares key information about skills needed for good social communication and strategies to help improve these skills.

Trainer Resources

Tips for Trainers

Be prepared. Gather needed information ahead of time to best plan for all participants who will attend the training.

Practice using the materials and tools ahead of time to make sure you are comfortable and confident.

Introduce yourself and allow time for participants to introduce themselves to you and everyone as well. Get to know each other.

Focus on one key message and topic at a time.

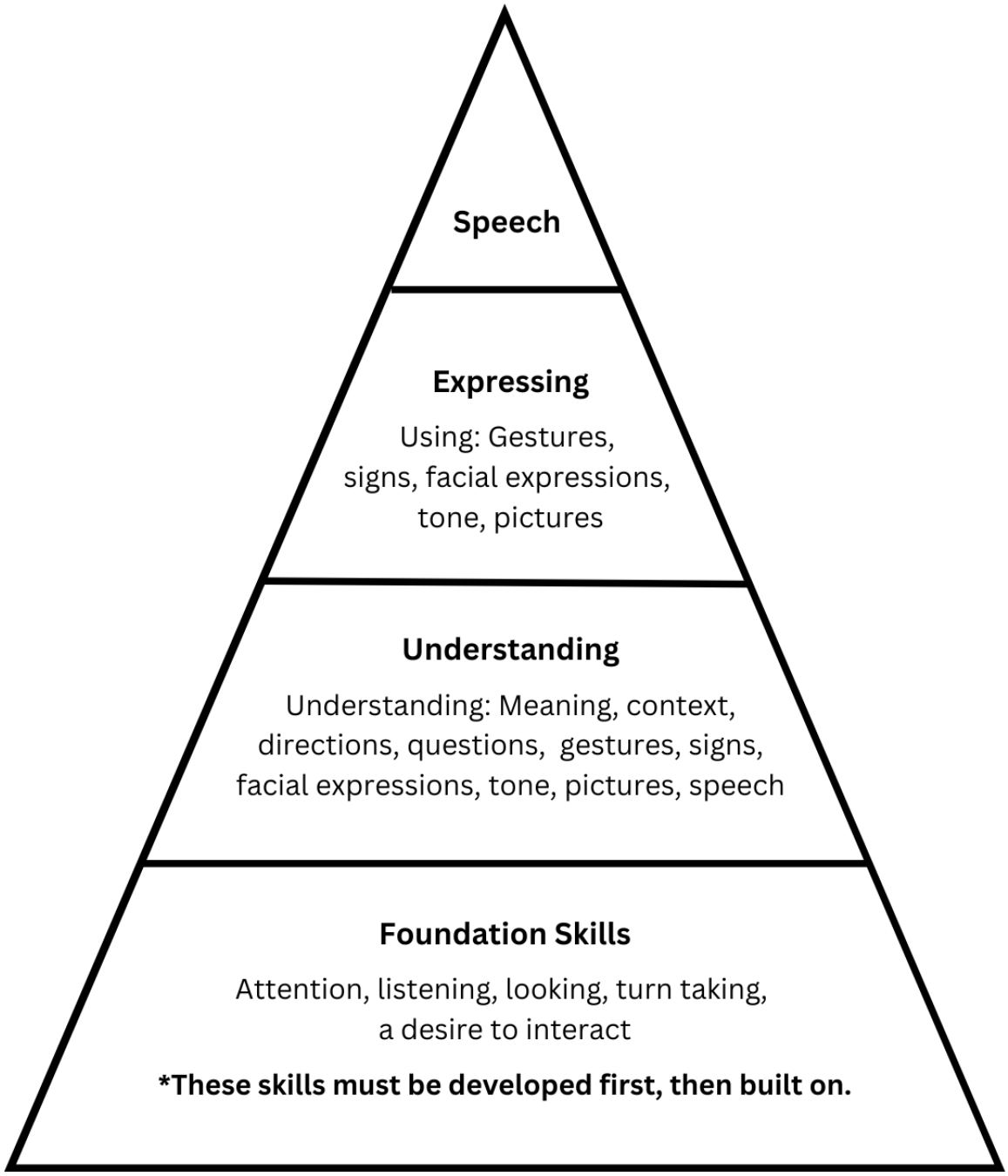
Read body language of participants to help you make sure everything is accessible and that they are interested and understanding**.**

Be yourself. When opportunities arise, share your own examples that relate to the topic and encourage others to do the same.

Ask questions to engage everyone and encourage group learning. If others ask questions and you do not have time to answer or do not know the answer, that's ok, you can follow up with them later.

Encourage those who usually speak up to wait more and those that normally don't to try to speak up more.

The Communication Pyramid



Strategies Table

This table contains all of the strategies included on the toolkit pages associated with this module. Each description provides a bit more detail than on the toolkit pages and the examples included can be used to provide more explanation about the specific strategies and also for role playing to help trainees practice to build deeper understanding. You can also share more of your own examples!

	Nonverbal	**Few words**	**Unintelligible**	**Social communication**
1. Create a situation Description: Look for opportunities where a child needs to communicate to solve a problem. You can do this intentionally or simply by trying to wait and not react immediately when you suspect a child wants/needs something. *Also sometimes called 'sabotage'	Lovingly WAIT for a few seconds before responding to a child's attempts to get something or gain your attention. We don't want them frustrated– but MOTIVATED to try to use a picture, gesture or vocalization/word instead of vocalizing or grunting.	Lovingly create opportunities for the child to have to communicate. As adults we often know what they want/need and simply "do it" before they comment/ask. Creating a situation helps them realize that another word can be helpful to them!	When targeting a specific sound, do your best to EMPHASIZE words that have the target sound in them - throughout your day. For example: Target sound = w. Be sure to say words like 'want, wet, water, wow, wipe, woah, who, we, one, why, wait, when, what, wood-etc.' So they can hear the sound and practice it back to you.	Use situations to create the opportunity for the child to need to look up at you to get more information/help/item. Using a longer pause, wait time– placing things just out of reach, moving yourself between the item of interest and the child, or even ignoring them for a few seconds can all create motivation to seek you out in order to communicate.

2. Spotlight words Description: Emphasize specific word(s) that are important for the child to know and learn for daily life. It's important to use nonverbal and verbal cues and emphasize the important word(s) throughout the day.	Choose the child's top 10 words. Pick ones that are powerful for the child. Make a list for the child's desk/wall. Make sure everyone knows them by drawing a quick picture or using an emoji. USE those words during activities every day. For example, "that" combined with a point can get the child the specific thing they want. As an adult, use "that" plus a point, to confirm things you believe the child wants.	Choose another 10 important words that the child is NOT yet saying. Following the steps in "non-verbal' . Emphasize or spotlight the new words all day! Combine the new words with words the child already says, so that you are showing them 2-word combinations!	If you have target speech sounds that are objects/actions – be sure to use those words throughout your day. Emphasize the child's imitation of the correct pronunciation.	For children who need help with social communication, we can spotlight/emphasize non-verbal facial expressions and gestures. We can also spotlight/emphasize 'rules' that the child needs to learn by using the same phrase/chant in routine ways. Learning routines is a strength for these children and we can use it to our advantage!
3. Out of reach Description: When we place things slightly out of reach, it can encourage children to be more persistent in asking or commenting.	Place items just out of reach, but within the child's vision. Name it as you ask them if this is what they want. Pause– say the name one more time, then give the item to them. Accept/	Place items just out of reach, but within the child's vision. Name it as you ask them if this is what they want. Pause– say the name one more time, then give the item to them. Encourage	Working with the target speech sound, place the item just out of reach and encourage the correct production of the sound within the word. For example: want– "Oh	Place items just out of reach, but within the child's vision. Name it as you ask them if this is what they want. Pause– say the name one more time, then give the item to them.

It also allows adults a few added seconds to emphasize the target words or speech sounds!	encourage any sound they can make so that those sounds can eventually become words.	them to use the words they can, and simply add in the new word. For example: If they say "more" then add 'mango'. You want more mango, mango– then give it to them	you want it" you do? You WANT it" ok, try "want" and then give it to them.	
4. Ask for more Description: 'More' can be communicated by gestures, formal sign or words and can get a child more food, drink, people, toys, clothes… anything! Look for opportunities for the child to communicate with you to ask for 'more.'	Look for times to give the child only one item (ex: toy, cracker) so they are motivated to ask for more. They can sign more or point to a picture card to ask too.	Your child is learning to use words, but may still vocalize (grunt) to get things. Be sure to pause, say and sign or gesture for 'more' – then give the child a moment to try and communicate "more" rather than grunt!		
5. Sign Language Description: A specific type of gesture using hands and body	Directly teach meaningful words/gestures by holding their hands/elbows and	Using signs helps people remain calm until they can use more words more effectively. Calm learners = better		Sign language / gestures are harder for this group to learn, but that doesn't mean they cannot– or should not

language to express yourself. Formal sign language is often used by people who are deaf and hard of hearing but informal signs (often created by the child) are sometimes used too and works well as long as the listener knows the meaning.	moving them through the motions. It doesn't have to be signed perfectly, just consistent so that others recognize it as a word.	learners!		be given time to learn them if this could be a beneficial strategy for their individual needs!
6. Visuals Description: Use pictures or drawings (i.e. food labels or small visual icons) to show wants, needs, or routines. These can be paired with words.	Grab or touch object that child wants. Ex: child wants a drink & you point to picture (can be hand drawn) of a cup	Pictures or drawings to indicate "I want juice" or "I see flowers" or pictures sequenced to show a routine (washing hands: water on, hands washing, soap, turn water off, dry hands on towel)	Child points to pictures or drawings to make phrases when requesting items. Ex: Symbols/drawings for "I need to go potty" or "I am hungry"	Demonstrate emotions with visuals. Later you can use a social story with pictures about specific skills or situations. A social story tells an event with appropriate ways to act with words and pictures.
7. Wait time Description: Allow time for the child to respond. It can take longer than	When you make a comment or ask a question - WAIT! Pausing is a very	When you make a comment or ask a question - WAIT! When the child uses		When your child makes a comment or request, but doesn't direct the communication to you - WAIT (count to

you think for them to form a response. Waiting is not always easy for adults. It takes practice. Try silently counting in your mind to 3 (or up to 10 if you think they need more time)!	powerful social cue for children to begin to understand that they are expected to respond in whatever way they can.	one word, wait… add whatever word would make sense next, so they HEAR the target word. WAIT again! If they do not imitate the next word, say it again and quickly move on. This is NOT a power struggle opportunity! It is a teaching strategy!		yourself) to encourage the student to shift their gaze to direct their words to you. When a child pulls on you, stop, wait, and if needed, bend down to 'catch their gaze' so that they begin to 'direct' their comments to you, rather than to the air.
8. Make comments Description: Adults tend to ask a lot of questions. Practice making comments and observations, which allows a child to comment back rather than simply answer yes/no. Say statements, remarks, or observations about what we feel, see, hear, taste, or smell. A comment invites a response, but does not	Ex: Wow! I see it too!	Ex: That is interesting! Woah! Hummm…	Ex: I heard you say "you want to " but I am not sure what you want. Can you show me, or tell me in another way. Always comment on what YOU HEARD clearly so that they do not have to restate everything.	Ex: Using comments invites the child to think about YOU and what you are trying to say. It invites social turn taking in conversation. Oh my! I wonder Hmmm My favorite is …… Use a gesture to comment (shrug shoulders)

demand it, like a direct question does.				
9. Talk out loud Description: Talk out loud about what the child is doing, and what YOU are doing, seeing, touching, eating, etc... This helps children understand and later USE the words.	Use short, simple phrases. Ex: "You are eating soup. It tastes yummy!" or "You are sad. You fell down. You are crying."	Keep it simple but you can add more words. Ex: "You like to run! You are smiling and running fast." I am tired. I am going to rest.	Same strategy but you can use longer phrases. Focus on using a sound they have difficulty producing. Ex: If they can't say "s" sound, you emphasize the "s" in words like "The soup will be so tasty with more salt."	Same strategy but you can use longer phrases. Focus on describing feelings and emotions. Ex: "You are frustrated because the book is ripped. You are fixing it and that makes you feel proud. Now you are smiling." or "I am smiling because I feel happy that we are playing together."
10. Two choices Description: Offer two items, pictures, or words. Keep the choices just OUT of reach. Ask if they want __ or ___. And WAIT! This strategy is powerful, simple, and is a less demanding way	Hold 2 objects in front of the child and have them look at, point to, or reach for their item of choice. Ex: Hold out 2 books and ask "Which book do you want to read together?"	Give two one-word choices. Ex: During meal time say "Do you want milk or water?" so the child can choose. It is helpful to offer two things that they CAN have! If it is off limits or you do not have it, do not include it		Hold the objects slightly out of reach to encourage the child to look between you and the object. When they reach for or name the item, pause. The pause is a cue to look up at you (direct their comment) to make sure you heard them. You

for a child to communicate a choice.	When the child looks at the desired book, or reaches/points NAME it.	as an option. Many children will simply imitate the last word you say. Be sure to mix up the order of what you offer so that you know for sure they are actually asking and not simply repeating.		can also give them the item, but hold on and do not release it for a second or two. Again, this helps the child understand that the communication gaze is important.
11. Verbal routines Description: Make words routine and predictable during daily routines. You can also do this by using songs (i.e. hello, clean up). When the child hears the same word(s) they can begin to anticipate the word and are more likely to 'add it in' when the time comes.	While walking from one place to another, count your steps out loud. When you go up/down the stairs, count out loud. The routine gets embedded in everyday use, and more likely for your student to repeat the words.	Child knows and uses single word such as 'eat.' During meals, set up the routine of saying 'eat ___' and label the food item. For example, "eat beans" or "eat fish" every time you eat an item – 'eat __."	Choose a few words that are challenging. Embed them in a song. Ex: If the "t" sound is hard, every time you put on your shoe/sock use a sing-song tone and sing "toe toe toe… tap my toe toe toe!"	Use a routine and helpful phrase. Encourage the child to use it too. Examples: " It's hard, but I can do hard things." or "Change is tough but change is ok." or "I think I can, I think I can" or "I can be a helper"!
12. Add a word When a child uses one or more gestures or words, add the next relevant word to show them what they could	When the child makes an action, you describe it with single words. Ex: When the child is mad and stomps their feet, you say "Mad.	Repeat the child's words and add one more. Ex: Child says "cookie," you say "more cookie" or "want cookie."	Repeat the child's attempt at a word and add one more word. Ex: Child says "I want tootie" and you say "Oh, you want	Add description word to child's phrase. Ex: child says "My turn," you say "My turn please."

say to make themselves understood. This helps to increase their vocabulary and sentence structure.	Stomp. Feet stomp."		chocolate cookie."	
13. Sing Description: Music engages the brain and soul in delightful ways. Singing and music are very motivating, create joy, and can help a child learn to use their voice. When we sing, we use different parts of the brain than when we talk, so sometimes it is easier.	Use hand/body motions with songs so that they can move along. Sing SLOWLY, but with inflection and fun!	Sing a familiar song and PAUSE to encourage them to add one or more words.	Make up songs that have target sounds in them. (ie: Good night SHHH, Good night SHHH, Good night SHHH, it's time to go to sleep)	Focus on the shared gestures and body movements in the songs. These students likely have words, but NOT the non-verbal parts of the song.
14. Demonstrate movement Description: Be sure to show your children what you want them to learn. You may use your own body gestures to show the mouth movements the sound requires. For older			When targeting a specific sound, demonstrate and explain how your jaw, tongue, lips, and voice are producing that sound. For example: for English "p" sound, lips are pressed together, tightly, jaw is closed, breath pops lips open,	

children, you can also use a mirror.			voice is off.	
15. Strengthen the mouth Description: Different parts of the body need to work together for clear speech to happen. Sometimes the muscles used for eating and talking are weak or tight. We need to help develop better muscle function by doing strengthening activities.	Get the mouth moving! Activities could include: Chewing gum or soft food, blowing bubbles, whistling, blowing kisses, making silly faces, smiling	Get the mouth moving! Activities could include: Chewing gum or soft food, blowing bubbles, whistling, blowing kisses, making silly faces, smiling	Strengthening activities: • Push with the tongue up and down or side to side against a tongue depressor, or spoon or other flat clean object). • Blow through a straw or blow bubbles (if they cannot fully close their lips yet and the straw is too difficult) • Do repetitive lip movements like "oo- ee– oo – ee"	
16. Start with easier sounds Description: Know what specific consonants and vowels are easy and hard for your children. Start with easy sounds to build routine and success,	Play with sounds! Animal sounds, environmental sounds, vehicle sounds to get child interested in making sounds.	Play with sounds! Extend animal/environment/ vehicle sounds to longer words (“boom!”, “meow”, “whoosh”) to engage student in communicating with you.	Emphasize sounds at the beginning of words and end of words. Make a list of 10 highly meaningful words containing target sounds. Model how to say the sound with your jaw, lips, tongue, teeth, voice/breath.	

then add in more challenging sounds. In English VOWELS are very important! *Also see the chart on the 'Unintelligible' toolkit page.				
17. Imitate sounds Description: We need to build a child's' sound 'bank' so they can put those sounds together and be easier to understand. Imitate them, then add new sounds so that they can imitate you.	When the child makes a sound, imitate the same sound back to them. You can also make sounds (such as animal sounds or sounds in the environment) and encourage them to imitate you. Have fun, take turns, and look at each other while doing this.	String sounds together to make words! For example, when a child says English "ma", say "mama–I want mama". Play with sounds to make words: child says "wuh" & you say "water"; "g" and you say "GO, let's go!"		
18. Practice a specific sound Description: Practice targeted sounds in fun short exclamations or words and then expand to longer words. It is also helpful to practice the target sound in the FIRST (ex: shoe, share)			Use a mirror or have a child watch your mouth! In English, we may start with early sounds like p,b,m,w,t,d. Have a child imitate these sounds with you with different ways like "pay, bay, may, way, tay, day" even if they are made-	

or LAST (ex: push, fish) position of words separately.			up silly words!	
19. Practice small words Description: Once your child can imitate sounds, quickly move those target sounds into meaningful words. Find small words that have the target sound. Everyday functional words are best (ex: 'sh' sound = shoe, shhh, share)			Start with sounds at the beginning of simple or one syllable words ("k" as in "cup"), think of many words with "k" at the beginning and target those. Then move to "k" at the end of simple or one simple words ("pack"), think of many words with "k" at the end of words and target those. Once they are solid in that, put sounds in longer words ("cucumber", "backpack").	
20. Tone of voice Description: Tone is voice sound that expresses mood. A listener can often understand wants, needs, or a response by a simple look paired with tone of voice. It is	Emphasize your tone of voice by using a louder or perhaps a softer tone. Does the child understand? Can they imitate? Yes –mmm No -mmm Maybe –-mmm I don't know– mmm	Emphasize your tone of voice by using a louder or perhaps a softer tone. Does the child understand? Can they imitate? Yes –mmm No -mmm Maybe –-mmm I don't know– mmm		While washing dishes, an adult can emphasize their own facial expressions and tone of voice – by leaning towards or away from someone– or by getting louder or softer– to gain the child's attention before handing them a

powerful and can be used even without speech.				dish to dry or put away. In this way, they are 'tuning in' to the nonverbal meaning behind the communication.
21. Eye Gaze Description: We direct our communication by looking toward our listeners. It can indicate attention, understanding and/or a choice.	Gaze toward objects and then to people to communicate an intention. Be sure to encourage your non-verbal students to use gaze to help you understand what they are thinking about, what they want, or what they need.			Culturally appropriate gaze is critical for two people to acknowledge that a message was both sent and received. Socially, it conveys that we are 'together' in the conversation. Eye gaze also helps the child take notice of the entire face, which also relays important information! Encourage eye gaze by setting up situations!
22. Facial expressions Description: Use expressions to show wants, needs, and emotions (ex: sad, excited, angry). Focus on demonstrating and	Imitation and use of facial expressions can tell you SO MUCH about what a person is thinking. More than their words, especially when words can have many meanings. Help	Imitation and use of facial expressions can tell you SO MUCH about what a person is thinking. More than their words, especially when words can have many meanings. Help		Imitation of facial expressions helps a child learn the 'hidden messages' of the face that are often so difficult for them to understand. Specific training/practice is

explaining these yourself to encourage the child's learning and use.	your non-verbal child learn to imitate and use facial expressions to communicate. Moving the facial muscles can help later, when they are learning specific speech sounds as well.	your non-verbal child learn to imitate and use facial expressions to communicate. Moving the facial muscles can help later, when they are learning specific speech sounds as well.		critical. Use your face, pictures of a familiar friend/adult, or a simple hand drawing. The face has meaning. We must make this clear for those who struggle with social communication.
23. Gestures Description: This is one of the first ways a child communicates using body movements, facial expressions, hand gestures and even signs.	Body movements can mean so much! Think of how with just a look, you know when your partner is happy or annoyed with you! You likely know the child's movements and what they mean. Use that information and expand/teach other gestures	Teach gestures and signs as a bridge for children to use until they can talk more effectively. Teach a gesture by using it (also known as spotlighting) and emphasizing it during your day.	Encourage your students to SHOW you want they are trying to tell you. Gestures help clarify communication!	Most communication is nonverbal! Gestures hold meaning when they are shared with others. Children who do not use gestures likely do not understand them. We need to teach this explicitly.