

**Stages of Behavior Escalation for Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASDs) and/or Developmental Disabilities
(Colvin & Sugai, 1989, Colvin & Martin, 2012)**

Behavior Escalation Stage	Description	Area(s) of Focus	Intervention Tips
1. Calm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Individual is relatively calm and cooperative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Focus on maintaining clear, consistent, productive environment and building rapport with individual 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Establish a consistent environment ➤ Use visual supports to clarify expectations ➤ Address sensory issues (if present) ➤ Teach other ways to communicate feelings, wants and needs (e.g., the replacements for interfering behaviors) ➤ Precorrect problem situations
2. Trigger	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Individual experiences unresolved conflicts that trigger behavior to escalate ➤ May displace anger on “safe target” (teacher, parent, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Focus on prevention and redirecting the individual’s behavior 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Remove the trigger (if possible and appropriate) ➤ If not feasible to remove, weaken the trigger’s impact by adjusting it or preparing the individual for how to handle it ➤ Remind the individual to use replacement skills
3. Agitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Individual is increasingly unfocused/upset ➤ May exhibit avoidance ➤ May be beginning to lose rational thought 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Focus on reducing the individual’s anxiety and increasing predictability in the individual’s environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Use non-confrontational non-verbal behavior ➤ Break down directions into smaller steps ➤ Give “start”, instead of “stop” directions ➤ Use short phrases and allow processing time ➤ Remind the individual to use replacement skills
4. Peak	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Individual is out of control and may have temporarily lost ability to think rationally ➤ Exhibits severe behavior (screaming, aggression, “meltdown”, SIB, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Focus on maintaining a safe environment for yourself, the individual in crisis and any observers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Isolate the individual by removing the audience ➤ Call for help/witness if needed ➤ Provide calming sensory input and/or allow the individual to use relaxation techniques ➤ Do NOT chastise/threaten consequences at this point in the escalation
5. De-Escalation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Having vented, the severity of individual’s behavior subsides ➤ Drop in energy level of individual after a crisis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Focus on helping the individual regain emotional control and demonstrate cooperation with neutral requests 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Allow the individual enough time to calm ➤ Provide calming sensory input and/or allow the individual to use relaxation techniques ➤ Make sure the individual has regained control before proceeding; look for less tense appearance, normal breathing, and willingness to comply with small requests
6. Recovery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Individuals may feel shame, sorrow, fear, or regret ➤ May not be able to verbalize feelings/ details of outburst 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Focus on debriefing/ problem solving then transitioning individual back to task 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Allow the individual to return to a familiar task ➤ Try <i>not</i> to eliminate the original request, limit or consequence so the outburst is not reinforced ➤ Problem solve and develop a plan with the individual’s family for better future behavior

Tips for Responding to Stages of the Behavior Escalation Cycle

Set the Stage to Prevent Anxiety, Agitation and Escalating Behaviors

- Build predictability into the individual's day by providing a consistent schedule which can be reviewed as often as the individual would like.
- Attend to sensory needs and issues.
- Use visual supports for transitions, expressing needs, teaching rules and expectations, etc.

Plan Ahead to Address Triggers

- If triggers can be anticipated, it may be possible to prevent their occurrence.
- If not unable to prevent, individuals can still be prepared in advance to handle trigger situations.
- Parents can help play "behavior detective" to find behavioral triggers.
- Try to identify any environmental factors that can be manipulated.
- Anticipate commonly-encountered antecedents or "triggers" for anxiety and escalation, including:
 - Transitions
 - Disruption of schedules and routines or "surprises"
 - New unfamiliar tasks, people, place, etc.
 - Sensory overload and cravings
- Pair verbal warnings about transitions with timers to make time concepts more concrete.
- Warn the individual of changes/unexpected events in advance.
- Rehearse how to handle novel situations.

Teach Self-Regulation Skills for Managing the Triggers Stage

- Teach self-regulation by helping the individual recognize his own body signals for anxiety, then choose relaxation strategies to try at that time to help manage anxiety.
- Teach relaxation or "self-calming" strategies (take 3 deep breathes, count to 10, think about something that makes you happy, etc.) and practice using them.
- Notice what sensory seeking behaviors the individual uses when anxious/agitated, then consider if they can be replaced with a more appropriate behavior that would meet the same sensory need. For example: rocking chair instead of rocking back and forth while standing/sitting, etc.
- Consider using ideas from *The Incredible 5 Point Scale* by Kari Dunn Buron and Mitzi Curtis to help teach the individual about modulating his responses to feelings, triggers, and internal states.
- Consider using ideas from *The Alert Program: How Does My Engine Run?* by Williams and Shellenberger to help teach the individual about using sensory-motor strategies to self-regulate.
- Use social stories from Carol Gray to give the individual information about expectations for trigger social situations so he can anticipate what may happen and how to respond appropriately.
- Use pre-correction to remind the individual in advance of skills being taught.

Use Pre-Correction (Colvin, Sugai, & Patching, 1993)

- Anticipate problem behavior and intervene *before* the problem occurs by "precorrecting" or reviewing *in advance* what is expected of the individual (before anxiety/agitation occurs).
- Pre-correction statements should be provided *prior* to the targeted problem (e.g., trigger situation)
- Use of pre-correction can help facilitate the development of self-regulation skills.
- To develop a "pre-correction procedure" for a specific issue:
 1. Identify the predictable behavior problem and the context in which it usually happens (for some individuals, this might require conducting a functional assessment or FBA).
 2. Specify *expected* behaviors—must teach what is expected/what to do because if we *only* focus on eliminating a problem behavior, we may end up with another problem behavior in its place.
 3. Have the individual practice the appropriate, expected behavior.
 4. Provide strong reinforcement for displaying the expected behavior—objective is to teach and reinforce specific expected behaviors in a setting that previously set the occasion for problems.
 5. Prompt the established expected behaviors (feedback, reminders, gestures, choices).
 6. Monitor and refine as needed.

Recognize Signs of Agitation as Early as Possible

- Look for increases or decreases in the individual's typical, "normal" behavior.
- Externalizing behaviors (e.g., increases to monitor):
 - Increases in self-stimulation
 - Repetitive self-talk
 - Low-level destructive behaviors
 - Aimless pacing and wandering
 - Changes in body language
- Internalizing behaviors (e.g., decreases to monitor):
 - Staring into space
 - Withholding speech/"becoming mute"
 - Withdrawing from activity
 - Seeking isolation

More Strategies for Agitation (i.e., what to do before a behavior escalates to the Peak)

- Give a small number of structured choices (e.g., no more than 2-3).
- Have visual choices available to redirect behavior into more appropriate choices.
- Give "start" requests instead of "stop" requests by stating what the individual is expected to do rather than what he should *not* be doing.
- Remind the individual to use relaxation techniques he has learned (use visual cues, if available).
- Limit the amount of verbal directions you give (more auditory input tends to be agitating for an individual in crisis). Instead, use pictures or written words to communicate and guide the individual to a quiet place and/or offer calming strategies.
- Use non-verbal and para-verbal techniques to reduce tension and anxiety, including non-threatening body language, calm tone of voice, and strategic pauses during speech (e.g., insert a brief "wait time" before each response to the individual; pauses tend to signal calmness).
- Be aware of personal space—invading personal space can increase the individual's anxiety.
- Be aware of your body position--standing eye-to-eye and toe-to-toe sends a challenging message.
- Keep your nonverbal cues nonthreatening (e.g., gestures, facial expressions, movements).

Maintain Safety for All During the Peak Stage

- Dangerous behaviors that may occur during the peak include serious destruction of property, physical attacks on others, self-injurious behavior (SIB), and running away.
- Guide the individual to a safe place, if possible.
- Have one person speaking to the individual and remove unnecessary people from the area.
- Reduce the amount of verbal language that you use, as it could exacerbate aggression.
- Show visual cues/picture cards directing the individual to use a pre-taught calming sequence.
- Understand that a "meltdown" will mostly likely need to "run its course".
- Watch for signals that the peak is over, such as less tense appearance, responsiveness to directives, or interest in preferred items/activities.

Debrief and "Start Over" After an Outburst

- Provide access to calming and/or familiar, repetitive activities (*not rewards*).
- Focus on returning to scheduled activities.
- Debrief to identify any additional, "new" triggers that may have incited this outburst, then develop a plan for how to address these.
- Try to determine the source of sensory "over-stimulation" (if part of the inciting issue) so this can be addressed. For example, if excessive auditory input was part of the trigger, provide the individual with an appropriate way to escape sound if needed (headphones, ear plugs, quiet area).
- Consider having a plan for how to proceed should future crisis situations occur.
- Conduct debriefing with the individual and problem solve for better future behavior (if appropriate).
- Try to have the individual complete some part of the initial task, if the outburst started due to work refusal, so that the escalation is not inadvertently reinforced.

General Tips for Supporting Individuals with an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

- Learn about how autism **impacts** this particular student. Everyone has heard the adage, “If you’ve met one child with autism, you’ve met one child with autism.” Work closely with the child’s parent, previous teacher, or any familiar adult to learn which specific behaviors indicate that the child is experiencing anxiety. For example, some children with autism flap their hands when excited. Others flap their hands when they’re beginning to feel stressed or anxious. How does the particular child you’re working with demonstrate that he’s anxious? Also learn about ways that have worked to be supportive of this child in the past. If you can intervene with the right supports when low levels of anxiety are demonstrated, you might be able to help avoid escalation.
- Uncertainty creates **anxiety** in many individuals with ASD, which increases the risk of tantrums, aggression, and meltdowns. Individuals on the autism spectrum need information about upcoming events and changes. They may benefit from having a schedule of daily events and/or reading social stories about changes to their schedule that they are about to experience (e.g. social story about fire alarms or school assemblies). If a change is made to a plan or strategy, call parents and ask them to help prepare their child for the plan as well.
- For some, **breaks and calming strategies** should be considered as part of the daily routine. Inconsistency in schedules can cause some individuals to feel overwhelmed, so a pre-determined routine should be implemented daily. Providing breaks and calming techniques only after a problem behavior occurs may inadvertently increase the likelihood of that behavior occurring in the future. By using a respectful and proactive approach, the individual will build self-esteem and confidence, as well as reduce anxiety.
- Unstructured activities and wait time can be a source of **anxiety** and confusion for some individuals. Specific directions and checklists of what to do during unstructured activities can be beneficial, as can providing a “wait time” activity.
- Many people with autism are **visual thinkers**. Use visual cues (hands-on demonstrations and modeling, objects, pictures) as needed to help the student to better grasp directions, etc.
- Efficient **organization skills** can be an area of challenge (i.e. completing homework, but forgetting to turn it in; messy desk/locker, etc.). These issues can impact academic performance, so a proactive support strategy is recommended. This may include **visual supports**, such as written checklists and reminders combined with direct guidance and instruction. Eventually, individuals can be taught to generate their own checklists and reminders.
- Remember to individualize **visual supports** to match the student’s abilities and interests. Do not overwhelm the learner with visual supports and make sure each serves a real purpose.
 - Free, downloadable visual supports from the Indiana Resource Center for Autism at: <https://www.iidc.indiana.edu/pages/visualsupports>
- Behavior can be a form of **communication**, particularly for those whose skills in communication are greatly impacted. To determine a pattern, pay attention to what occurs right before and after a behavior. If you are stumped, ask others what might be the underlying cause(s) of behaviors.
- Know that just because an individual may be **nonverbal**, he or she is still able to hear and understand much of what is said around them. Make sure all messages are positive.
- **Perspective-taking** is a challenge for many individuals on the autism spectrum. When watching a movie or looking at pictures of people, practice these skills by asking them questions about how the person is feeling, what they are thinking, and what they are going to do next. Have them explain and point out the specific cues that support their ideas.
- It is important to teach individuals on the autism spectrum **social skills**. Turn-taking and social distance are skills that may not come naturally and need to be taught.
- Every individual is different, so it’s important to be mindful of **sensory input** in the individual’s environment. Consider the visual input (e.g. fluorescent or bright lights), auditory input (e.g. loud noises), tactile input (e.g. certain surfaces, textures, fabrics), and smell/tastes (strong perfumes or certain food textures) that may be bothering the individual with an autism spectrum disorder. If these

sensory issue are not addressed, repetitive behaviors and a failure to respond to certain relevant stimuli may develop.

- Some individuals with autism have difficulty **processing** visual and auditory input at the same time, so try to avoid insisting on both looking and listening at the same time. A famous quote about this is “I can look at you or I can pay attention, but I can’t do both.” Consider giving either a visual task or an auditory task.
- **Break tasks down** into smaller steps. Showing pictures of each step, modeling the task, and saying each step out loud can help facilitate learning. Set students up for success and provide rewards when goals are reached.
- Include **essential information** in your directions that will answer these four questions for the student: (1) How much work is there to do in this task? (2) What exactly am I supposed to do? (3) When do I do the work? and (4) What is my payoff for doing the work?
- Try to keep **language** as simple as possible by using minimal words when making a point or providing information. Avoid long strings of verbal instructions. People with autism may have problems remembering the sequence. Directions with more than three steps may have to be written down. Avoid the use of sarcasm and idioms, as these may be taken literally.
- Many individuals with autism spectrum disorder may be less likely to communicate for social purposes and will need to practice **conversation skills**. This may include talking about a topic that is not their special interest, staying on topic, turn taking, asking related/appropriate questions, checking for their conversation partner’s understanding and predicting what information their partner may or may not know about a concept or situation.
- Some individuals will engage in **restricted and repetitive behaviors** because they have a limited repertoire of alternative behaviors and interests. It is important to expose individuals with ASD to a variety of activities and experiences and explicitly teach them leisure skills.
- Many students with autism can become **fixated** on one subject such as trains or maps. The best way to deal with fixations is to use them to motivate school work. If the child likes trains, then use trains to teach reading and math. Read a book about a train and do math problems with trains. For example, calculate how long it takes for a train to go between New York and Washington.
- Use highly motivating **reinforcers**, such as fixations or fascinations, to teach a new skill or behavior. The use of surveys or sampling procedures will ensure the reinforcer is truly motivating for the learner. Be sure all staff know what skill is being reinforced, how often, and the importance of consistency.
- When considering **accommodations**, it’s important to find a balance. Accommodating students too much may eliminate options in the future.
- If a student is not able to perform a task, consider whether the request is too abstract. For example, telling a student to write a story about something that interests them is very abstract. One strategy is to provide specific **choices**.
- Teaching individuals to **self-advocate** for their own needs is an important skill that can ease the transition from school age to adulthood. It could be as simple as teaching them to request their favorite food by handing you a picture, or for someone with more verbal skills, to explain their communication and accommodation needs to their college professor.
- Individuals with ASD often have difficulty **generalizing skills** from one setting to another. A student who has learned to initiate conversations within the lunchroom may not be able to initiate conversations on the playground. They may need to be taught skills across different settings, people, and activities.

Additional Resources

- Evidence-Based Practices Briefs available at: <http://autismpdc.fpg.unc.edu/content/evidence-based-practices>
- National Institutes of Health Autism Research Network: <http://www.autismresearchnetwork.org/AN>

Tips for Using Social Stories

Social Stories™, created by Carol Gray, are text or stories describing a specific social situation. It provides a visual cue for the child to reflect upon and is individualized for the student. Included in the story is “who” is involved, “what” happens, “when” the event takes place, “why” it happens and “how” it happens. Relevant social cues are included throughout the story. Social Stories sequence, explain and sometimes illustrate social rules or concepts. They are also used to help the student understand the perspective of others. The story can include what others are thinking and feeling, or explain the motives and actions of others.

When writing a Social Story it is important to describe the desired response rather than the problem behavior. For instance, if Linda has a meltdown on a field trip, a Social Story written for subsequent field trips would not say, “It is important to not have a tantrum on field trips.” The story would describe the sequence of events for the field trip, who would be going, how long the trip would last, etc. The idea is to use the story to teach the student about the situation, including what he/she *can* do when he/she encounters a given situation, instead of focusing solely on what *not* to do.

While pre-made social stories are available (*see resources below for links to some of these*), in many situations it is best to create your own social story for the student to be tailor to his/her individual needs. Social stories are often written in a book format using visuals (photographs, picture symbols, drawings) to help aid understanding and with one concept per page. In some case, the student may hand-illustrate pages of the story with pictures representing various sentences of the story. The story can also be written into a “power point” file (as one would create a power point presentation from Microsoft office); then the child can “read” his story by viewing the power point presentation on a computer. An “I-Movie” can also be created to make the “I-Story” more interesting to the child. A story can also be read and then recorded on audio tape with a tone or verbal cue for the child to turn the page. A video could be made of the child and peers acting out scenes from the story, with the written story presented along with the video when it is shown to the child. The story can be reviewed using “role play” where the child and others act out scenes from the story themselves or with small figures using rooms, set as scenes, made from shoeboxes, etc.

Social stories and scripts should be reviewed proactively and used to teach, practice and re-teach strategies. Introduce *one* social story at a time. After the student has had daily exposure to this story at least one time per day for approximately 3 weeks, another story may be introduced. Review social stories with the student on a regular basis at a “neutral” time of day (i.e., when the student is calm) to facilitate understanding. Do *not* wait until a student is frustrated or upset to review the story. Do *not* review the story as an immediate, punitive response *after* a challenging behavior or the student may feel that being asked to read the story is a “punishment” or it means he is being “bad”. The goal is for the story to be viewed as positively as possible by the student.

Try to include a corresponding visual cue related to the replacement behavior in the story within the text of the story. Then this cue can be used during the student’s day to remind him of the story and promote generalization of his use of the targeted skill. Show the student the picture cue from the story when you are trying to remind him of a strategy from one of his stories, rather than having him read the story every time he starts to “misbehave”. To “precorrect” the student using a social story and/or a specific visual cue from the story, read the story and/or show the student the visual cue that corresponds to information from a story to remind him of the expected behavior shortly *before* he will encounter a problematic or “trigger” situation.

Social Story Resources

- <http://www.thegraycenter.org/social-stories>
- <http://www.pbisworld.com/tier-2/social-stories/>
- <http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu/resources/strategies.html#scriptedstories>
- http://www.speakingofspeech.com/Social_Skills_Pragmatics.html
- http://schools.nyc.gov/Academics/SpecialEducation/D75/for_employees/AdaptedBooks
- https://w3.setbc.org/students/Pages/PictureSET.aspx?1750_ID=376

20 Quick Tips for Supporting Students with “Classic” Autism

1. Provide a very clear structure and a set daily routine including time for preferred activities. Using a written or visual schedule to explain the day’s events helps because it is “static” (doesn’t move, so the student can take his time processing the information and refer to it as needed).
2. Provide warning of any impending change of routine or switch of activity.
3. Recognize that some change in manner or behavior may reflect anxiety (which may be triggered by a [minor] change to routine).
4. Break down bigger tasks into smaller “chunks” consisting of very specific tasks in sequential order.
5. Provide periodic “transition warnings” so that the student can prepare for stopping an activity/starting a new one. Timers can help with this, too.
6. Teach what “finished” means and help the student to identify when something has finished and something different has started. Take a photo of what you want the finished product to look like and show the student. If you want the room cleaned up, take a picture of how you want it to look some time when it is clean. The students can use this for a reference.
7. Keep your language simple and concrete (but not insulting so!). Get your point across in as few words as possible. It’s more effective to say “Pens down, close your journal and line up to go outside” than “It looks so nice outside. Let’s do our science lesson. As soon as you’ve finished your writing, close your books and line up at the door. We’re going to study plants outdoors”.
8. Address the student by name when giving directions and try to secure his attention first before speaking (the student may not realize that an instruction given to the whole class also includes him/her). Calling the student’s name and saying “I need you to listen to this as this is something for you to do” can sometimes work to redirect the student to listen to the teacher’s directions.
9. Give choices, but not too many (field of 2-3). If a child is asked to pick a color, only give him two to three choices to pick from. The more choices, the more confused an autistic child will become.
10. Give very clear choices and try not to leave choices open ended. You’re bound to get a better result by asking “Do you want to read or draw?” than by asking “What do you want to do now?”
11. Repeat instructions and check for understanding. Use short sentences and visual supports (schedules, task lists, picture cues, etc.) to ensure clarity of instructions.
12. Try not to take apparently rude or aggressive behavior personally; recognize that the target for the student’s anger may be unrelated to the source of that anger.
13. Help the student avoid “sensory overload” or overstimulation. Minimize/remove distracters, or provide access to an individual work area or carrel, for a task involving concentration. Colorful wall displays can be distracting for some students, others may find noise very difficult to cope with.
14. Allow the student to avoid certain activities that may be overwhelming in terms of “sensory input” (such as loud fire drills, crowded assemblies, etc.).
15. Seek to link school life and academic tasks to the student’s particular interests.
16. Explore using technology in instruction (including learning websites, word-processing and computer-based learning for literacy).
17. Avoid using sarcasm. If a student accidentally knocks all your papers on the floor and you say “Great!” you will be taken literally and this action might be repeated on a regular basis.
18. Avoid using idioms. “Put your thinking caps on”, “Open your ears” and “Zipper your lips” will leave a student completely mystified and wondering how to do that.
19. Teach specific social rules/skills, such as turn-taking and social distance.
20. Try to protect the student from teasing and provide peers with some awareness of his needs.

12 Tips for Facilitating Communication with Individuals Who are Nonverbal

Just because a person can't speak doesn't mean they have nothing to say. Communication is a basic human need, allowing people to connect with others, make decisions that affect their lives, express feelings and feel part of the community they live in. People with little or no speech still have the same communication needs as the rest of us. We may just have to work a bit harder to find a communication strategy that works...

1. **Make it mean something.** There needs to be a purpose or reason for the individual to communicate. Example: Katie can clap her hands so we taught her to clap if she wants to say yes.
2. **Level it up.** Talking is easier if you can see each other. Sit so you are at the same level.
3. **Talk about it.** Even if an individual can't speak or has limited understanding, it is important to keep talking to them about what's going on.
4. **Treat every non-verbal indication as a communication attempt.** Try to determine what the individual is trying to say, then comment based on that, so the individual knows you understood.
5. **Create a "communication dictionary".** This describes what the individual's behaviors look like, what each means, and how everyone should respond, to ensure all communicative partners are aware of the individual's communicative behaviors and respond consistently; information available at: <http://www.steppingstonesres.org/augmentandalt/004-comm.htm>
6. **Teach choice-making by providing structured choices.** Show two options or say "do you want X" (tapping my hand in one spot) "or Y" (tapping my hand in another).
7. **Use objects of reference.** To help people with intellectual disabilities and/or other disabilities to understand the world around them, use an object to symbolize the activity they are about to participate in (e.g., fork for dinner, towel for bath); information about objects in a schedule at: http://www.autismclassroomresources.com/visual-schedule-series-object-schedules_25/
8. **Make "flash cards" to use as visual cue for supporting communication.** Take photos of the person's favorite family members, foods, toys, objects, etc. Giving a choice of no more than three cards at a time, encourage them to make a choice by pointing or touching (or eye gaze for individuals with physical disabilities). The following sites contain free picture symbols or visual supports that you can download:
 - <http://www.usevisualstrategies.com/AutismVisualPrintablePictures.aspx>
 - <http://www.do2learn.com/>
 - http://www.setbc.org/setbc/communication/aac_nontech_toolkit.html
 - <http://www.practicalautismresources.com/printables>
9. **Communication passports.** A communication passport is a short document that the individual has with him all the time. It gives the people they meet basic information about how they communicate and what support they need; more about communication passports at: www.communicationpassports.org.uk
10. **Communication books and choice boards.** Some individuals can learn to make choices by pointing to a symbol and or word in a communication book or on a choice board. They might be able to point with a fist/finger, use eye gaze or a head pointer. Custom Boards Premium is an app for ipad that can be used as a board creator for those who need picture symbols to communicate; information at: <http://itunes.apple.com/us/app/custom-boards-premium/id463344117?mt=8>
11. **Teach ways to indicate "yes"/ "no".** Additional information about teaching "yes/no" at: <http://teachinglearnerswithmultipleneeds.blogspot.com/2012/11/the-yesno-series-part-one.html>
12. **Communi-bands (green "yes" wristband on one arm; red "no" wristband on the other).** For an individual who is non-verbal and may have a physical disability (such as quadriplegic cerebral palsy), Communi-bands can be used to establish a yes/no response that is clear for everyone to understand. Communi-bands are available to purchase from: [http://www.thegreencrab.com/Online-Shop\(2343233\).htm](http://www.thegreencrab.com/Online-Shop(2343233).htm)

Embedding Opportunities to Communicate

Ask “Does the student have a reason to communicate in this situation?” If not, then try to embed one!

Arrival time:

- Greeting peers and staff.
- Making a choice about who the student helper will be for the day using photos to choose between.
- Use a Step by Step Communicator to request removal of jacket, gloves or items from a back pack.
- “Forget” to help student take off his coat so that he has to make a request.

Reading Activity:

- Choosing between 2 books or choosing a classmate to read with.
- Requesting that a page be turned (using gesture, vocalization, gaze, voice output, etc.).
- Repeating a line in a story with voice output device.
- Answering questions about story by pointing, using eye gaze, facial expression, etc.
- Using a picture communication board to comment on the story (e.g., "That's scary"; "That's funny")

Social Studies:

- Use a voice output device to call on peers to answer questions (i.e., ask peers to identify capital).
- Use a voice output device to direct peers to move from location to location on a map.

Math:

- Use a switch activated spinner to select numbers to create math problems for peers to compute.

Circle or Sharing Time:

- Attach a souvenir to the top of a BIGmack with a message about the souvenir to share with class.
- Use voice output/communication board so student can ask peers questions or comment on topic.

Cooking:

- Use a Step by Step Communicator or a picture communication board and have the student direct peers in a multiple step recipe.

Science:

- Use a Step by Step or a picture communication board to give directions for a science experiment.
- Present objects that are unexpected. For example, if lesson is on marine life, present an octopus or have it appear from concealed or unexpected places (descend from a string on ceiling).
- Give student a puzzle to do that relates to the science topic. Have some of the pieces missing so that the student needs to ask about them.

Lunch:

- Use a place mat with picture symbols to make comments or requests.
- “Forget” to give student part of her lunch.
- Give student carton of juice rather than juice in a cup (so student has to ask for help opening it).
- Put part of the lunch in a container that is tightly sealed so that student needs to request help.

Recess:

- Use picture boards, wristbands, or pictures/digital photos on a key ring for choice making between recess activities (swing, slide, etc.), who to play with, or making comments.
- For indoor recess, use Step by Step to direct peers in a game situation (Simon Says).

Art:

- Withhold some of needed materials, such as a brush, in order to elicit a request.

P.E.:

- Engage student in turn taking such as bean bag toss. Wait for student to communicate “my turn.”

Dismissal:

- Use voice output device to relay a message about events of the school day to the home setting.