

## SKILLS FOR ENHANCING COMMUNICATION

Type of Disability	Sub-category	Skills for enhancing communication
<p><b>Children with Physical impairment</b></p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respect personal space. Avoid leaning on their wheelchair, walker, or walking stick.</li> <li>• If you see that it is difficult for a child to go up or down the stairs, you may suggest that they lean on you or help them carry their bag.</li> <li>• Children who drop off from some games because they cannot walk or have mobility impairments, you should offer a game that all children are capable of participating in.</li> <li>• Where there are no access ramps for children with wheelchairs, you can offer to assist a child access a building. Learn the right ways of helping people with wheelchairs in advance; otherwise, you may hurt them.</li> <li>• When you speak to a person using a wheelchair, it would be better if you also take a seat, so that they do not have to look up when speaking to you.</li> <li>• Address directly the child, not their guide.</li> <li>• Push the wheelchair only if the person asks you to do so.</li> <li>• When helping a child with a wheelchair to move up or down, you should listen carefully to their instructions. Never lean or hang on a wheelchair, because it is the same as leaning or hanging on its owner.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Musculoskeletal</b></p> <p><b>Neurological</b></p> <p><b>Congenital</b></p> <p><b>Albinism, Vitiligo</b></p>	<p><b>For children with albinism and vitiligo:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use language that respects the child’s condition without making assumptions about their experiences or limitations.</li> <li>• Avoid using terms that might be perceived as insensitive or offensive. Instead, use terminology that acknowledges their condition respectfully.</li> <li>• If the child has albinism, be mindful of their potential visual impairments and adjust activities or environments as needed (e.g., provide adequate lighting).</li> <li>• Use visual supports or written instructions to help with communication, especially if there are concerns about visual acuity.</li> </ul>

**Hearing Impairment  
(Deaf and hard of  
hearing)**

- Basic proficiency in sign language.
- Make sure you have the child's attention before you speak. Use appropriate gestures, facial expressions, actions, and pictures to help the child understand language and gradually acquire it.
- Check frequently to make sure the child understands. If they have not, rephrase your message, rather than merely saying it again
- To avoid prejudice, openly discuss his auditory challenge with his playmates and let them learn about his hearing aid.
- Make sure other children speak to the child calmly, clearly and one at a time.
- Sit with your face towards the light so that your lips are easily visible. Look straight into the child's eyes (as far as is culturally appropriate) and speak clearly, keeping your mouth uncovered.
- If needed, simply write down what you want to say.
- Use gestures where appropriate; for example, you can mime holding a glass and drinking when asking the child if they would like a drink.
- You can ask if there is anyone in the family who can help to interpret for you or find out if there is a person in the local community who uses sign language and who can assist
- Do not speak very loudly. Be sure to ask whether the child hears you and adjust your voice accordingly.
- Encourage the other members of such a child's family to learn how to communicate through gestures, home signs, lip reading and use them together at home
- Rapid growth and development of children happen within the first three years of life therefore, it is important for parents to help children who are deaf or cannot hear well learn a language as early as possible.
- Encourage parents to create time to play with the child or play when doing the household chores
- Advice on use of hearing aids; ensure the child can use them well

**Communication and Swallowing Disorders**

**Intellectual Disability**

**Deafblind**

- Use tactile (hands-on-hands)
- Determine the child's preferred modes of communication, which might include tactile sign language, braille, gestures, or other forms of sensory input.
- If the child uses tactile sign language, gently guide their hands to form the signs and encourage them to feel and practice the signs.
- Utilize touch to get their attention and guide their hands for activities. Simple gestures or movements can also be effective.
- Use a gentle touch on the shoulder or hand to get the child's attention before communicating
- For children who can read braille or use tactile markers, consider labelling objects with texture or braille labels to facilitate identification.
- If the child has some hearing ability, use sound or vibration cues to supplement communication.
- Investigate assistive technologies designed for deafblind individuals, such as braille displays, communication devices, or sensory stimulation tools to enhance communication and provide additional methods for the child to interact with their environment.

**Speech Language and hearing disorders – Apraxia**  
**Swallowing disorders**

- Provide visual support such as pictures, symbols, or written words to aid comprehension and expression.
- Break down complex instructions or information into smaller, more manageable parts.
- Use gestures, facial expressions, and body language to enhance communication.
- Encourage the use of Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) systems, such as picture-based communication boards or speech-generating devices

- Address children using simple words.
- State your request clearly and precisely.
- Stay calm and be ready to rephrase your request in several ways.
- Use concrete examples frequently.
- To confirm a child has understood your message, discreetly request that they repeat it.

**Cognitive/Learning  
Disabilities**

**Dyslexia, dysgraphia,  
dyscalculia, specific  
learning disability**

- The child's family may also be able to help with interpreting the child's movements or sounds if they cannot speak.
  - Ensure you do not speak to the child in a way that makes you appear superior.
  - Always speak clearly, using short sentences. Use the child's name so that they know you are talking to them.
  - It is very important to respond to the child's attempts to communicate so that they understand the effectiveness and importance of healthy communication. If a child points to an object of interest, you can point to it and clearly name that object to indicate that you have understood and are listening.
  - Use visual images like illustrations, pictures and photos to support your interaction with the child
  - Use videos; they have the advantage of sound and images
  - Read to the children
  - Talk to them often in a friendly way
  - Provide explanations constantly
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- Use simple and clear language and be direct with your message
  - Be patient and give the child extra time to process information and respond and celebrate efforts through positive reinforcement and celebrate small successes to build confidence.
  - Incorporate visual aids such as visual Schedules like use of charts, pictures, and schedules to help children understand routines and instructions.
  - Show rather than just tell. Demonstrations can make abstract concepts more concrete.
  - Repeat important points and instructions as needed.
  - Maintain consistency in rules and expectations to provide a stable learning environment.
  - Tailor your communication style to the individual child's needs, whether it involves more visual support, hands-on activities, or verbal explanations.
  - Regularly evaluate what works best for the child and adjust your methods accordingly.

<b>Neurodevelopmental Disorders</b>	<b>Autism Spectrum Disorders</b>  <b>Down's Syndrome</b>  <b>Fragile X</b>  <b>Cerebral Palsy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use clear and concise language when communicating.</li> <li>• Provide visual support, such as visual schedules or social stories, to enhance understanding and predictability.</li> <li>• Use visual support or social scripts to teach social communication skills and social interaction.</li> <li>• Allow for extra processing time and provide breaks when needed</li> </ul>
<b>Special Needs</b>	<b>Emotional and Behavioural disorders</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Child delinquency</b></li> <li>• <b>Oppositional defiance disorder</b></li> <li>• <b>Conduct disorder</b></li> <li>• <b>Aggression, etc.</b></li> </ul> <b>Mental Health disorders</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Anxiety Disorders</b></li> <li>• <b>Personality Disorder</b></li> <li>• <b>Bipolar Mood Disorder and other mood disorders etc.</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a positive and trusting relationship by showing genuine interest, being consistent, and providing emotional support.</li> <li>• Be dependable and consistent in your interactions to build a sense of security and trust.</li> <li>• Give the child your full attention and listen without interrupting. Show that you are engaged and interested in what they have to say.</li> <li>• Maintain a calm and composed demeanour, even if the child becomes upset or displays challenging behaviour.</li> <li>• Recognize and praise the child's positive behaviours and efforts. Positive reinforcement can encourage desired behaviour and build self-esteem</li> <li>• Clearly communicate behavioural expectations and boundaries. Ensure that rules are fair and consistently enforced.</li> <li>• Explain the consequences of not following rules or expectations, and ensure they are implemented consistently and fairly.</li> <li>• Recognize and validate the child's feelings and experiences. Show empathy and understanding towards their emotional state.</li> <li>• Approach the child's behaviour and emotions without judgment or criticism.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a safe and trusting relationship where the child feels valued and understood.</li> <li>• Approach the child with empathy and without judgment to make them feel comfortable sharing their thoughts and feelings.</li> <li>• Use straightforward and simple language to avoid confusion. Children with mental disorders might struggle with complex instructions or abstract concepts.</li> <li>• Maintain a calm demeanour, even in challenging situations. Your composure can help the child feel more secure and less anxious.</li> <li>• Learn about potential triggers for the child's symptoms and work to minimize or manage them.</li> </ul>

**Gifted and talented**

• **General Intellectual Abilities**

- Offer conversations and activities that stimulate their advanced cognitive abilities. Ask thought-provoking questions and engage in deep discussions.
- Acknowledge and respect their advanced knowledge or skills and avoid talking down to them.
- Pay attention to what they say and show genuine interest in their perspectives and interests.
- Give detailed and constructive feedback, focusing on both their strengths and areas for improvement. Avoid vague comments.
- Give them time to process their thoughts and feelings and be patient if they need time to articulate their ideas.
- Be mindful of potential feelings of isolation or loneliness and work to connect them with supportive social groups or activities.