ICI Training Standards Manual

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Syracuse University
Institute on Communication and Inclusion

Section I: Introduction

History of this document

At the close of the national facilitated communication conference held in Syracuse in May 1998, a meeting was held to discuss the need for developing standards for the training and use of facilitated communication (FC). At that meeting, we decided to develop a document which clearly describes the elements of best practice in facilitated communication, and outlines a training process which promotes those best practices. Our intention was to produce a document which would:

- develop consistently high-quality practice of facilitated communication across users and facilitators,
- increase the focus on working toward independence, and
- give assurance to agencies that the method is being applied correctly.

This document represents the work of approximately 20 highly experienced facilitated communication trainers from the United States and Australia. It is the first edition of a work which will, by its nature, be continuously subject to revision and refinement.

Who is it for?

This document is intended to be of use to:

- Facilitated communication trainers, as a means of bringing their training and supervisory practices in line with those which have been seen to be important and effective in many settings;
- Facilitators, as a means of self-evaluating their own training and practice, and identifying those areas in which further training or supervision is needed;
- Parents and others advocating for facilitated communication services for a child or friend, as a means of informing themselves and others concerning the adequacy of services being received;
- Administrators and supervisors, as a means of planning the services needed when a commitment has been made to support someone who uses facilitated communication;
- Facilitated communication users, as a tool in maximizing their own involvement in the design and implementation of the services and supports they receive; and
- Researchers, as a way of informing them of current understanding of best practice in the field.

What's included in this document?

This document is made up of several interconnected parts:

- A description of fundamental values and principles underlying the use of facilitated communication, and best practices embodying those principles;
- a framework for training and technical assistance, which identifies several levels of competence to be achieved by facilitators as they gain training and experience, and the means whereby that training can be gained and supported;
- a list of facilitator competencies which facilitators are expected to master as they gain training and experience;
- an appendix listing the resources - books, articles, handouts, and videotapes - which are used in training and supervision;
- appendix checklists used in monitoring facilitated communication user skills, and facilitator acquisition of competencies.

What this document is not:

This document is not intended to serve as a free-standing "how-to" manual; since mentorship and supervision are a vital part of the training process, this document is intended to serve as a tool supporting that personalized guidance. Neither is this document a professional code, dealing with the issues of accountability, liability, or ethical practice as defined by various professions. Rather, this document attempts to define best practices across professions, with the facilitated communication user as the primary reference point. It is not a model policy for agencies or districts, although it could be of great use in the development of such policies.

How to access the training called for in this document

The Institute on Communication and Inclusion at Syracuse University serves as an informational clearinghouse on training in facilitated communication throughout North America. It provides the kinds of training described in this document, and maintains lists of regional resources in training and supervision as well. The Institute can be contacted at icistaff@syr.edu or 315.443.9379.

Section II: Fundamental Principles and Best Practices

How to use this section:

The information included in this section should be read by anyone involved in facilitated communication, or anyone involved in considering the use of facilitated communication by someone with a communication impairment. Administrators and program coordinators are encouraged to make the contents of this section available to anyone involved in supporting a current or potential facilitated communication user. This section contains a summary of currently acknowledged best practices related to the responsible, effective, and sustainable implementation of facilitated communication training (FCT); it also grounds these practices in a set of beliefs and values which inform and sustain them. The principles and practices here can serve as a basis for

- evaluating existing services;
- setting goals and a long-range direction for services being planned; and
- bringing collaborative teams "up to speed" on this aspect of their shared enterprise.

1. Citizenship and the Presumption of Competence

Citizenship is membership in a community which is a person's by right, regardless of her or his specific qualities, skills or characteristics. Citizenship carries with it a presumption that a person's interests and those of her or his community are somehow intimately linked with each other.

Acknowledging the citizenship status of individuals with significantly impaired communication directs us towards making certain presumptions on behalf of those persons -- most specifically, that they belong in, and have a direct interest in, the surrounding community, and that they are capable of communicating when properly supported with the assistance of appropriate aids and techniques.

It is especially important that difficulties with communication not be taken as evidence of intellectual incompetence. Although a person may be unable to demonstrate what she or he thinks and feels, or may have great difficulty being understood, she or he should not be further handicapped by the attitudes of others.

2. The Right to Communicate

The right to communicate is both a basic human right and the means by which all other rights are realized. All people communicate. In the name of fully realizing the guarantee of individual rights, we must ensure:

- that all people have a means of communication which allows their fullest participation in the wider world;
- that people can communicate using their chosen method;
- and that their communication is heeded by others.

Where people lack an adequate communication system, they deserve to have others try with them to discover and secure an appropriate system. No person should have this right denied because they have been diagnosed as having a particular disability. Access to effective means of communication is a free speech issue (TASH, Resolution on the Right to Communicate, November, 1992).

3. Empowering the Facilitated Communication User

Language and communication have many functions. For example, Halliday (1975) identifies the seven main functions of language as

- expression of needs and wants,
- regulation of the actions of others,
- establishment of social bonds,
- expression of self,
- discovery of information,
- expression of fantasy and make-believe, and
- giving of information.

The goal of facilitated communication is to allow facilitated communication users to use language to accomplish all of these functions.

To do this, facilitated communication users need to be provided with opportunities for empowerment. This is accomplished through the shared efforts of facilitated communication users, their facilitators and those with whom they interact. As in all forms of communication, especially those where prominent power and status differences exist among the participants, we know it is possible for facilitated communication users to be influenced by their facilitators.

So what can we do as facilitators to acknowledge and take responsibility for this while supporting the empowerment of the person with whom we work? The first step in changing our practices is always our awareness of those practices.. We can ask ourselves such questions as, "Am I determining the pace or am I allowing the facilitated communication user to determine the pace?", "Am I getting a third person's attention or am I teaching the facilitated communication user how to do that?", "Am I determining who reads or hears what the facilitated communication user has typed, or am I letting the facilitated communication user determine who receives his or her communication?"

By identifying the decisions one makes as a facilitator, sharing that information with the facilitated communication user, and then gradually helping the facilitated communication user to assume responsibility for those decisions, we decrease the facilitated communication user's dependence on the facilitator, increase the facilitated communication user's autonomy and control during interactions, and empower each individual to use language and communication to the fullest (Sabin, 1994).

4. Total Communication Approach

The approach of facilitated communication training is not meant to replace established, effective strategies currently being used by a person; rather, it is meant to provide a means whereby that person can expand current strategies and develop a more comprehensive means of expression. As a person learns to use facilitated communication, his or her current strategies should not be ignored but utilized, both to build intent and to expand his or her interactions. Facilitated communication should always be offered as part of a full system of strategies which might include sign language, simple gestures and facial expressions, single words and phrases, and independent pointing. This would allow a person the greatest opportunity to communicate in various situations and to decide which strategy can be used most effectively in a given circumstance. New communication strategies may develop from the use of facilitated communication; for example, many individuals who use facilitated communication have experienced an increase in their ability to use speech effectively. It is expected that, over time, individual facilitated communication users will grow in their use of facilitated communication, and that the ways they use facilitated communication will change. This might include both changes in the way they use it to interact with others, and in the way they combine facilitated communication with other communication strategies. Facilitators need to be ready to 1. provide appropriate support, 2. use an effective combination of strategies, and 3. promote the user's ability to change the combination of strategies to improve effectiveness (e.g., using word prediction software, reading aloud what is typed).

5. Collaborative Team Approach

Support and commitment from an aid user's team (program planning team, circle of support, etc.) is critical to long term success with augmentative/alternative communication (AAC) and facilitated communication training. In order to be empowered and personally invested in any communication evaluation, planning, and teaching/learning, the aide user must be included and involved from the outset, and on a regular ongoing basis, in decisions which relate to

- the types and levels of support that person needs for successful communication;
- activities, therapy and training to be undertaken;
- communication aids and devices to be used; and
- plans for dealing with specific concerns.

In addition to the facilitated communication user, parents, other family members, and others who know the person well will usually play a vital role in obtaining and providing this information, in initiating action, and in other aspects of the decision-making process.

It is important to gain consensus from the team on the use of facilitated communication training when an individual has been assessed as a candidate for training. While members of a team may have varying perspectives on the efficacy and validity of facilitated communication, it is helpful that their discussions not become polarized. To assist team members in making decisions about the use of facilitated communication, they should all receive the most current information on what facilitated communication is and how it works as well as a comprehensive look at the issues surrounding it. They need to be able to

understand why the person they are involved with might be a good candidate. As part of this educational process, it is helpful to have people with extensive experience with facilitated communication and a broad range of other AAC approaches available to answer questions, provide new information, and problem solve around specific issues and concerns. In the end, the individual and his or her team must determine the appropriateness of facilitated communication training and other educational and augmentative approaches to communication, and whether or not to pursue them.

6. Assessment

In order for facilitated communication training to be considered and successfully implemented, two things must occur: an individual needs to be identified as a candidate and those who support that individual need to show commitment to the training process. Both of these elements begin with the assessment. The goal of assessment in facilitated communication training is to determine the benefit of facilitated communication for an individual, and, if applicable, give recommendations concerning the specific use of the method with that candidate. In determining the benefit of facilitated communication training for an individual, the following should be taken into consideration:

- current communication strategies,
- current and past use of AAC strategies,
- independent pointing skills,
- history and current description of movement problems,
- current and past use of support strategies across the person's range of social contexts.

In cases where other AAC strategies have been effective, facilitated communication training may be considered as an additional benefit. In cases where current communication strategies are ineffective and AAC strategies have not been tried, facilitated communication training may be recommended on the basis of significant and specific movement problems. It is important to note that facilitated communication training is not seen as a substitute for AAC approaches, but rather as a way of effectively and rapidly gaining access to a wider range of AAC than might otherwise be possible.

Minimally, people are considered candidates if they have no speech or their speech is limited, erratic or inconsistent; and if their ability to point independently is not consistently reliable. It is not necessary that the person demonstrate literacy skills in the assessment in order to be considered a candidate. The assessment should carefully consider what has been tried, and what has been effective. It should compare independent skills with facilitated skills and have a rationale for the need for support through facilitation by the potential candidate. It should also consider the effectiveness of other support strategies such as structuring communicative interactions, making environmental accommodations, and using routines and scripts.

If it is determined that facilitated communication training would benefit an individual, recommendations should be given through the assessment that helps develop the person's initial use of facilitated communication. Recommendations should include

- specific support strategies for dealing with hand function issues (e.g., the amount of resistance and pull back needed)
- specific support strategies for general movement issues (e.g., support for trunk positioning and eye gaze)
- minimum effective level of physical support (i.e., degree of fading achieved while allowing for reasonably accurate pointing)
- optimal positioning of the candidate and the device relative to each other • description of observed literacy skills
- device options, with recommendations addressing both short-range and longer-range access issues
- other supports necessary for successful communication (e.g., the commitment of the support team to create a positive environment, give consistent access, and allow time to practice)
- strategies that would enable the user to focus his or her attention on the task at hand
- plans for a continuing training process, including scheduling designed to optimize opportunities for effective practice for the candidate and his or her facilitators.

If a person is thought to be a candidate for facilitated communication training, he or she should be properly assessed by an experienced facilitator who has been trained to do assessments. An assessment for the use of facilitated communication should preferably be done by a communication therapist with extensive experience in facilitated communication, or lacking that, by a para-professional trained in AAC.

7. Elements of Facilitated Communication Training

Facilitated communication is a type of Augmentative/Alternative Communication (AAC) for people who do not speak or whose speech is highly limited and disordered, and who cannot point reliably (Biklen & Cardinal, 1997; Crossley, 1994). The method has been used by people with autism, Down syndrome, cerebral palsy, pervasive developmental disorders, and other developmental disabilities (Crossley & Remington-Gurney, 1992; Biklen, 1993; Crossley & McDonald, 1980; and Crossley, 1994).

Facilitated communication training involves developing communication skills through pointing (e.g., typing or pointing at pictures or letters) with a partner, or facilitator. The facilitator provides physical support (e.g., holding the person's wrist or forearm during pointing, providing backward resistance as the person tries to move the arm forward to point, placing a hand on the shoulder as the person points or types). This support is helpful in overcoming such movement-related difficulties as tremor, impulsivity, low muscle tone, poor eye-hand coordination, and/or difficulty in forefinger isolation (Crossley, 1994).

Facilitated communication training also involves far more than physical support. Like training in all AAC methods, it involves

- various forms of prompts and cues, (e.g., constant feedback concerning the letters typed or pictures and letters pointed to, reminders to look at the target, verbal cues to start

pointing or to stop pointing repeatedly at one target item, the asking of clarification questions, such as "I'm not sure what you mean by that, could you explain?"), and

- encouragement and emotional support (e.g., "Keep going, you're doing fine" or "Go ahead, you can do it").

Central to best practice is facilitator attention to providing quality feedback/monitoring for the facilitated communication user. Crossley (1996) has described the key elements, including these:

- Monitoring to make sure the facilitated communication user looks at the communication board.
- Facilitator saying each letter as it is indicated; otherwise, the communication user has no way of knowing if he or she had conveyed what was intended. Some communication devices have voice output. Those with visual display may still not provide any guarantee of sufficient feedback if the facilitator is not certain that the person is focusing on the monitor or other display as well as on the letters to which he or she is pointing.
- The communication board or device needs to include correction strategies, especially a delete key and backspace.
- The facilitator needs to teach correction strategies to correct errors; the facilitated communication user should be given the confidence (through encouragement) to correct his or her communication partners' (i.e., facilitators') errors if they miscall letters. • The facilitator needs to check with the facilitated communication user both during the writing of the message and once the message is complete to ensure that the facilitator got it right.

8. Introducing the Technique

The information learned in the assessment process is used to develop a plan for teaching skills to the communicator and for providing supports to people who would be facilitators for that person. This process of "getting started" is highly individual, but can be guided by the following considerations:

- Follow the recommendations of the assessment regarding choice of hand, type of support, and seating.
- Plan in advance the choice and position of device(s), and appropriate activities for getting started.
- Establish a regular schedule by which the practice of pointing through facilitation can develop.
- Clearly explain to the communicator what is being done and why, and have the use of the technique demonstrated either by an experienced facilitated communication user, or through use of a video.
- Use challenging material that is meaningful to the communicator.
- Structure activities to maximize the success of the communicator.
- Provide varied and open ended activities, allowing for the opportunity for complex communication.

- Treat the person as a competent communicator, one who has ideas and feelings to share.
- Support the communicator in avoiding or interrupting verbal and typed echoes when they interfere with communication which accurately expresses the communicator's intent.
- Support the communicator in controlling difficult behavior.
- Work with a patient, positive, and persistent attitude.

For communicators who are new to the use of facilitated communication, it is vital that the getting started process be done with the involvement of an experienced facilitator. This person could work directly with the communicator in the getting started process; conversely, he or she could support others to work directly with the communicator. It is important that new and inexperienced facilitators receive training and supervision to ensure appropriate and effective use of the method, as described in Section III of this document.

Communicators who are experienced facilitated communication users often need to train new facilitators so that they can have continued access to communication. As in the situation with a new communicator, it is important that an experienced facilitator/trainer be involved in the process, providing supervision while the new facilitator is developing the skills of support.

It is imperative that a communicator have more than one person as a facilitator. Every communicator using facilitated communication should have multiple facilitators in his/her life. This means that getting started should involve more than one person as a new facilitator. It is helpful to involve people from the various aspects of that person's life, so that facilitation is not available only in a limited range of settings.

9. Independence

A primary, long-term goal of facilitated communication training is independent communication. This goal involves

- being able to access communication aids without physical support;
- being able to initiate the process of communication with others; and
- exercising control over the content of one's communication.

The fading of physical support should begin at the outset of the training process, with both facilitators and facilitated communication users aware of the importance of this goal.

Achieving independence is a collaborative and dynamic process. It needs to be viewed within the broader context of individuals' progress towards greater self-determination in their lives. It is critical, therefore, that facilitated communication users be involved on an ongoing basis in decisions relating to the development of plans and strategies for independence. One significant factor in this involvement is the opportunity for facilitated communication users to observe, either in person or by means of videos, other facilitated communication users who have succeeded in typing independently. Facilitators need to be skilled in adjusting their levels of support depending on the content of an individual's communication, the situations those individuals are in, and their particular emotional and physical

states. Some people may be able to type independently in social situations where the messages are short and routine, whereas if they are writing an academic course paper, they may need physical support to handle communication of greater complexity and quantity.

The work towards independence is a long-term process and is the result of sustained, high-quality support and training provided by skilled facilitators. It is important to recognize that progress towards independence will vary across individuals. Progress toward independence will be affected by

- severity of movement and hand function difficulties,
- skill and experience level of facilitators,
- availability of facilitators,
- opportunities for regular use of facilitated communication,
- access to appropriate technology,
- types of activities and environments in which an individual is involved , and
- consistency of opportunities to practice more independent typing. (Crossley, 1994)

It is helpful to get input from AAC specialists on appropriate communication aids and devices and input from occupational and physical therapists on strategies that might assist a person in improving their hand function skills, seating or positioning.

10. Competency-based Facilitator Training

All facilitators should participate in a supervised training process so that they learn the appropriate and correct skills for supporting a person in his or her communication. Training programs for facilitated communication should give information about the background and conceptual foundation for the use of the method. In addition, programs need to address the unique needs of the individual user/candidate, develop the skills of facilitators, and give supervision to new facilitators to the point that they are able to both support a facilitated communication user in open communication and systematically fade their physical support.

All facilitators should participate in a training process which includes a combination of classroom learning and direct supervision from an experienced facilitator. This supervision should be provided in the initial stages of the facilitated communication training process and maintained over time to ensure both that facilitators are using the technique correctly, and that they continue to develop their skills as facilitators. The competencies described as beginner competencies in Section IV, "Facilitator Competencies," correspond to those which a new facilitator would be expected to master during the early stages of his or her work as a facilitator. Mastery of these competencies should be monitored and documented by an experienced facilitator.

11. Multiple Facilitators

Facilitated communication training must involve ongoing, active widening of the number of people prepared to support an individual's communication. Facilitated communication users

should have access to regular training and support from a number of trained and experienced facilitators for several reasons:

- to reduce dependence on a particular facilitator,
- to increase independent communication, and
- for there to be sufficient examples of valid and authentic communication to document in a portfolio.

Facilitation with an inexperienced facilitator, or with one who has not worked previously with a particular facilitated communication user, is likely to be more challenging and frustrating than facilitation with someone with whom the facilitated communication user has an ongoing relationship. Therefore, the contact time of facilitators should be arranged so that experienced facilitators are in a position to support the development of both expertise and comfort within the new dyad. Inexperienced facilitators should not be expected to provide support beyond their skill (e.g., in test situations).level.

12. Technical Assistance

Due to the dynamic nature of communication in general, and facilitated communication in particular, family members and professionals who support persons with disabilities who use facilitated communication need to stand ready to problem-solve the many issues that develop as a part of the movement from a specific communication strategy to the establishment of an over-all system of effective communication. Problem-solving includes, but is not limited to, giving a person access to communication across situations throughout the day, developing appropriate technology supports, and helping the person communicate throughout the day with whomever he or she would like.

No single discipline subsumes all of the expertise and experience needed to address these issues. Therefore, a plan for technical assistance to the facilitated communication user and his or her facilitators should be developed collaboratively by such support personnel as AAC specialists, speech and language pathologists, assistive technology specialists, occupational therapists, educational specialists, and specialists in positive behavioral supports.

13. Documentation

Documenting the progress of facilitated communication users and their facilitators over time is essential. This is an area that should be addressed formally within the facilitated communication user's individual support plan, as described in the following sections on "Portfolio Approach" and "Validation, Authorship and Authenticity").

McSheehan and Sonnenmeier provide one excellent framework for documenting both the skills of the facilitated communication user and the skills of his or her facilitators. Their approach is based on a collaborative view of communication (Duchan,1993; Sonnenmeier & McSheehan, 1993), which emphasizes the contributions of both participants to the communication process and the construction of messages.

The documentation process is grounded in a set of assumptions about competency, the nature of physical supports, and the purpose of documentation. It is also based on the premise that in order to understand how facilitated communication access is being used by a particular individual and facilitator, it is necessary to examine skills and supports in six areas: physical, communicative, literacy, contextual, technological skills and supports, and ongoing training and technical support. Based on clinical experience and analysis of facilitated interactions, these areas are relevant to describing the nature of facilitated interactions and for making recommendations regarding ongoing training and skill development (McSheehan & Sonnenmeier, R. FC Documentation Protocol 1994). [See Appendix I: Bibliography].

a. Portfolio Approach

A communication portfolio provides a flexible approach to documenting progress over time for both the facilitated communication user and his or her facilitators. The portfolio documents over time instances of valid communication. It is important to note that validation represents a set of skills to be learned in the process of becoming a competent, responsible communicator; it is not a test of the user's abilities. In addition to the facilitated communication user's portfolio, a portfolio of the facilitators' training, skills, and abilities should be kept, documenting each facilitator's progress through competency training. This documentation should be used to determine the facilitator's level, and which supports he or she is prepared to provide for the facilitated communication user.

For the facilitated communication user, indicators of validity to be documented could include the following:

- similar patterns of spelling and typographical errors across facilitators;
- typing of similar topics and themes across facilitators,
- consistent style of typing across facilitators,
- instances of independent and/or initiated communication,
- self-correction of mistakes,
- effective use of protest strategies,
- sharing of information not known to the facilitator,
- successful participation in message-passing exercises,
- behavior or actions that confirm typed communication,
- speech that correlates with typed communication,
- consistent physical style of typing across facilitators, and
- physical attention to the typing (e.g., eye contact with the communication device).

b. Validation, Authorship and Authenticity

If the use of more formal validity testing is pursued, careful consideration needs to be given to such factors as the types of tasks used, the familiarity and naturalness of the test environment, the experience level of the facilitator, and both the facilitator and facilitated communication user's feelings about doing the test.

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Biklen and Cardinal (1997) have performed a meta-analysis of experimental studies of authorship in facilitated communication. In this analysis, they have identified 14 conditions which increase the likelihood that facilitated communication users will be able to demonstrate their authorship. Any responsible attempt at formal validation of authorship should consider the following factors:

- extensive experience with facilitation by both facilitator and facilitated communication user;
- practice using multiple trials;
- consultation with facilitated communication user on test and format;
- familiar facilitators;
- monitoring for facilitated communication user's style;
- no-risk, or low-risk testing;
- building of confidence; with limits on opportunities to fail
- naturally controlled conditions;
- ongoing feedback on performance;
- minimization of word retrieval tasks;
- presentation of information through multiple modalities;
- age appropriate content;
- personally relevant content; and
- extensive time to respond to questions.

c. Sensitive Information

Extraordinary circumstances involving critical life decisions, sensitive information, or allegations of abuse require the use of specific validation protocols involving the use of outside, objective facilitators. A particularly useful set of guidelines for such procedures is contained in the publication of the Facilitated Communication Institute, "Severe Communication Impairment, Facilitated Communication, and Disclosures of Abuse" [see Appendix I: Resources], any administrator supervising facilitators or services being provided to individuals who use facilitated communication should be familiar with the content of these guidelines.

Section III: Framework for Training and Technical Assistance

How to use this section:

This section outlines the process by which facilitators progress from their initial introduction to the method, through increasing levels of competence. It describes the training, supervision and other supports to be provided to facilitators as they acquire skills and experience.

This section can be used by:

- administrators, as a tool in long-term planning for staff development and resource allocation;
- program coordinators, as a framework for setting short-term goals for staff;
- parents and advocates, as a means of identifying to agencies and school districts what resources will be needed to provide effective training for facilitators;
- facilitated communication trainers, as a way of describing the progression and scope of training to be offered.

The goal of all programs designed to train facilitators is the same: to produce qualified, competent facilitators. How the training is done will vary given differences in environment, and availability of resources, but all models will share essential common elements:

- an introductory information session;
- resource and information exchange,
- a continuum of beginner, intermediate and advanced training,
- direct supervision leading to indirect supervision,
- continuing education, and
- ongoing technical assistance.

Facilitator training is part of a broad training on disability, disability rights, inclusion, AAC, positive supports, and movement differences and accommodations.

Introductory Information:

Most training begins with the delivery of introductory information by an experienced facilitated communication trainer. This can occur on a one to one basis, in small groups, or in a workshop format. It typically takes from two to eight hours, with the longer workshops taking two to three days. This is intended as an introduction to facilitated communication and is attended by people interested in becoming facilitators as well as those school or social service administrators who want to learn more about the method. This level of training may be useful in helping individual teams decide whether to explore the use of facilitated communication with a specific person. People participating at this level have gained only an overview of facilitated communication and do not have the skills necessary to be a facilitator nor to do an assessment.

Teaching Beginner Skills:

This stage of training is designed to teach new facilitators basic skills in facilitation. Basic skill training is necessary as a part of exploring the use of the method with a candidate. It is also indicated when expanding the number of facilitators for an experienced facilitated communication user, or introducing new facilitators to accommodate a change in their circle of support. An essential part of this early training is simulating facilitated communication with a non-disabled communication partner so he/she can give feedback. The facilitator trainee should play the parts of both the facilitator and the facilitated communication user, so he/she can better understand the process.

Supervision:

The acquisition of these skills is an ongoing process that occurs over time with initial intensive support/supervision given from an experienced facilitator. Supervision is decreased as skills/competencies are gained and the facilitator is able to demonstrate reliable, consistent skills. (See beginner level competencies.) New facilitators need time to work directly with and consult with a supervisor. The new facilitator must also have time to practice his or her skills with the facilitated communication user. The amount and length of supervision needed is dependent on

1. the prior experience of the candidate/fc user,
2. the trust and confidence that builds between the new facilitator and the candidate/fc user, and
3. allotted time to build both their relationship and skills in working together.

The new facilitator should be familiar with Best Practices (see that section) in Facilitated Communication and should develop a plan for getting started which will be carried out under supervision; this plan should include specific objectives, such as working toward open communication. Facilitators should keep two portfolios- one assessing his or her own skill development and the other recording the progress of the facilitated communication user.

A facilitator at this level is considered a beginner and should work to master those competencies as delineated in the Beginner Category on the "Facilitator Competencies" list (see Section IV).

Intermediate level:

This level of training is for those facilitators who have mastered the basic level of facilitator skills. This typically refers to those facilitators who have had at least 6 months of direct work with a facilitated communication user. Intermediate level training focuses on increasing facilitator skills in the areas of independence and validation. It also may involve facilitators receiving in-depth information on selected topics related to facilitated communication.

A facilitator at this level should work to master the competencies as delineated in the Intermediate Level on the Competency list (see that section.) Supervision at this level of training

can be less frequent and indirect. Support may be accomplished more through phone conferencing and email correspondence.

Advanced Level:

This level of training is for experienced facilitators who have mastered the skills at the intermediate level. This typically means that they have had at least one year's experience with facilitated communication and have worked successfully with several different facilitated communication users. Facilitators at this level may be designated by their agencies/schools to serve as supervisors of others who are new facilitators. This would help to build within agencies and schools the organizational capacity to provide ongoing training and supervision for facilitated communication. These individuals are eligible to enter the trainers' program. Facilitators at this level should work to master the competencies as delineated in the Advanced Level on the Competency list (see that section).

Resource and Information Exchange:

In addition to participation in various levels of facilitator skill training, facilitators should have access to up to date information on facilitated communication. This is critical to assist facilitators to build and maintain their skills. Agencies and schools, etc., should develop a library of resources and information on facilitated communication, such as, web based information, resource libraries, newsletters, and bibliographies.

Continuing Education:

In addition to participation in training on facilitated communication and resource and information exchange, facilitators should have access to ongoing support and opportunity to network with people who have extensive experience and knowledge about facilitated communication. This networking can occur in several different ways:

- access to groups and/or informal meetings where there is regular discussion of the various aspects and issues of facilitated communication
- access to conferences which discuss facilitated communication as well as ancillary approaches that enhance the use of the method (e.g., sensory integration);
- consistent connection to those organizations which articulate the current research and practice of the method
- access to facilitated communication users other than those whom the facilitator primarily supports.

Ongoing Technical Assistance:

New facilitators and educational teams often need support for problem solving issues of implementation and program development for people who use the method. This can be provided through onsite technical assistance, either single visit or ongoing, focused on working with the issues for a specific individual or situation (e.g., IEP planning and problem solving, classroom modifications, positive supports, peer

relationships/friendship development). Technical assistance should be provided by a person who has expertise with the method and understands the broader issues of disability, communication, accommodations and programming needs. This person is often a trainer or a facilitator at the advanced skill level. People who use facilitated communication as their primary means of communication have often been employed to provide their unique skills and knowledge in this capacity.

General issues:

In considering the training process, the following points are helpful:

- Train more than one person as a facilitator. The two, three or more people should have consistent roles in that person's program/life and spend regular time with the individual.
- For a new candidate for facilitated communication, consider an assessment prior to introductory training so that from the outset of training attention can be given to the specific needs of the individual and the recommendations developed from the assessment.
- At the time that training begins, attention should be given to setting up a schedule for supervision, allotting time for practice, and developing strategies for networking. This overall effort establishes a system of support for the new facilitator which leads to a greater chance for a successful experience.
- Plan for the long term goal of independence right from the beginning. Provide for those involved with support to address this goal through continuous opportunities beyond the initial training.
- Experienced facilitated communication users should be involved in the planning of the training as much as possible. As training begins, they should take an active role in teaching their new facilitators how to provide support.

Section IV: Facilitator Competencies

How to use this section:

This section lists the general competencies and specific skills which should be mastered by facilitators. The competencies are divided by subject area, and are further subdivided into beginning, intermediate, and advanced levels.

This section is designed primarily for use by:

- facilitated communication trainers and supervisors, as a tool for developing specific training goals and monitoring their trainees' progress
- facilitators, as a way of tracking their own progress.

The competencies are organized into levels for the convenience of trainers, and as a way of providing markers of progress to facilitators. In reality, all facilitators are engaged in a continuous process of skill development and refinement, with an ongoing reassessment of what is known and what is yet to be learned.

These competencies can be used to chart a facilitator's progress, to organize ongoing curriculum, and to structure experiences for facilitators. They should not be used as a means of evaluating a particular facilitator's job performance. (A facilitator's progress on these competencies reflects as much on the actions of the trainer and other circumstances as they do on the efforts of the facilitator.) The information in this section is also provided in checklist form in Appendix II (Supervision Checklist). That checklist can be kept as a running record of a particular trainee's mastery of these competencies.

History and Background

ALL LEVELS

General Competency	Specific Skills	Resources
1. Understands and can describe the method.	1. While observing a facilitated communication interaction in person or on videotape, can describe the types of support being provided by the facilitator.	Teaching Beginner Skills training
1. Understands and can describe the development of the method.	1. Is familiar with Crossley and MacDonald's work in Australia, and with Crossley's subsequent work.	Crossley, 1994; Crossley, 1997; Crossley & MacDonald, 1980
	2. Knows of independent discoveries of facilitated communication in various parts of the world.	Biklen, 1993

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Neuromotor Concepts

Beginner

General Competency	Specific Skills	Resources
1.Understands movement differences and their relationship to facilitated communication	1. Understands the basic concept of apraxia.	Biklen, 1993; Crossley, 1994
	2. Understands seating and positioning issues.	Crossley, 1994
	3. Understands hand function issues.	Crossley, 1994
	4. Understands and can explain relationship between movement concerns and the utility of facilitated communication for an individual.	Donnellan and Leary, 1995; Leary and Hill, 1996, Biklen, 1993
	5. Understands the concept of accommodation and recognizes the need to make changes.	Donnellan and Leary, 1995;
2. Understands processing issues and their relationship to facilitated communication.	1. Understands the importance of sensory integration issues for some facilitated communication users.	Berger, 1993; Eventyr, 1997

Intermediate

General Competency	Specific Skills	Resources
1. Constantly changes accommodations when needed.	1. Recognizes when sensory processing problems break down communications.	Supervision
	2. Positions self in readiness/anticipation of initiation.	Teaching Beginner Skills training
	3. Provides activities in preparation for typing.	Teaching Beginner Skills training
	4. Provides additional supports with typing (e.g. wrist supports, joint compression, deep pressure).	Supervision
2. Explores use of accommodations in a variety of constructs.	1. Provides physical support to play musical instruments, do art projects, perform self-care tasks, etc.	Supervision; Todd (Exceptional Parent)

Advanced

General Competency	Specific Skills	Resources
1. Is able to teach others about accommodations.	1. Explains rationale and demonstrates applications.	Participation in introductory training as part of "Training of Trainers"
2. Explores strategies for facilitated communication user providing own	1. Helps facilitated communication user discover and use own rhythmic movement for accessing accommodations. communication device.	Supervision; Networking

Physical Support

Beginner

General Competency	Specific Skills	Resources
1. Provides minimum effective level of support.	1. Positions self, facilitated communication user, and devices so facilitator can provide good support for facilitated communication user, monitor eyes, keyboard, positioning, etc.	Crossley, 1994; Schubert, 1993; Teaching Beginner Skills training
	2. Provides constant backward pressure as the facilitated communication user moves hand toward keyboard.	Teaching Beginner Skills training
	3. Cues facilitated communication user to return to neutral position above keyboard for each letter typed.	Teaching Beginner Skills training
2. Changes support as needed.	1. As facilitated communication user gains more control through the session, the facilitator decreases backward pressure and shifts point of support as appropriate.	Supervision
	2. Facilitator negotiates decreased support with facilitated communication user if the facilitated communication user attempts to maintain greater support than needed.	Supervision
	3. Greater support provided, in conjunction with clarification strategies, when typing becomes unclear.	Supervision.

Intermediate

General Competency	Specific Skills	Resources
1. Provides regular opportunities to practice reducing physical supports.	1. Identifies and negotiates with facilitated communication user specific schedule and appropriate materials and activities for practicing the reduction of support.	Supervision
	2. Debriefs practice activities with facilitated communication user and plans future practice sessions in advance.	Supervision

Advanced

General Competency	Specific Skills	Resources
1. Explores new strategies, establishes priorities, and sets goals for reducing physical supports.	1. Develops a written plan of goals and procedures for reducing physical supports, in conjunction with the facilitated communication user, which becomes a part of the facilitated communication user's portfolio.	Chadwick (handout); Watts, 1994

Behavioral Supports

Beginner

General Competency	Specific Skills	Resources
1. Sees behavior as communication.	1. Recognizes the contributions of both "positive" and "negative" behaviors to communication.	Donnellan and Leary, 1995
2. Is able to hypothesize the intent of the behavior as seen from the facilitated communication user's perspective.	1. Is able to suggest to the fc user, for confirmation or further clarification, the possible meanings of a specific behavior.	Donnellan et al, 1984; Beukelman and Mirenda, 1998
3. Attempts to differentiate between intentional and unintentional behavior.	1. Recognizes that some behavior may be nonvolitional.	Donnellan and Leary, 1995
	2. Tracks patterns of behavior, and decides what to attend to and what to ignore.	Supervision

Intermediate

General Competency	Specific Skills	Resources
1. Explores with the facilitated communication user communicative strategies to express intent.	1. Works out with the fc user more effective and socially acceptable means of expression in certain situations.	Lovett, 1996
2. Knows when to ignore, redirect or intervene in the face of challenging behaviors or those incompatible with communication.	1. Ignores verbal behavior that is determined to be not meaningfully under the control of the fc user.	Olney, 1993; Supervision

Advanced

General Competency	Specific Skills	Resources
1. Is able to teach others about behavioral supports and accommodations.	1. Describes strategies, models and what to do for others.	Donnellan and Leary, 1995
2. Works in collaboration with facilitated communication user to support behavioral changes; negotiates with fc user concerning incompatible behaviors.	1. Asks facilitated communication user's opinion regarding meaning of behaviors, and sets goals in collaboration with facilitated communication user.	Lovett, 1996; Shevin, 2000
3. Understands functions of ancillary approaches (e.g. AIT, craniosacral therapy) in addressing behavioral issues.	1. Actively implements other supports such as sensory integration strategies.	Williams, 1996

Communicative Supports

Beginner

General Competency	Specific Skills	Resources
1. Recognizes the difference between a facilitator and a conversational partner.	1. Can support the fc user in conversations with people other than the facilitator.	Supervision; Teaching Beginner Skills training
	2. Encourages conversations with partners other than the facilitator.	Supervision
2. Recognizes when messages are vague or incomplete.	1. Asks clarifying questions.	Crossley 1994
3. Understands and describes various levels of message construction from highly structured to open conversation.	1. Can use the "ladder of communication" effectively.	Crossley 1994, Schubert, 1993
4. Deals with extra letters by requests for clarification rather than speculation.	1. Gives feedback about extra letters rather than ignoring them.	Supervision

Intermediate

General Competency	Specific Skills	Resources
1. Expands complexity and types of communication.	1. Can ask various kinds of questions that draw on increasingly open communication.	Crossley, 1994; Schubert, 1993
2. Supports communication beyond "expression of wants and needs".	1. Invites opinions, ideas, and sharing of feelings.	Supervision; Leary, 1992
3. Consistently uses strategies to clarify and confirm meaning of messages.	1. Asks about unclear spelling.	Supervision; Schubert, 1993
	2. Asks if interpretation is correct.	Supervision; Schubert; Crossley, 1996
4. Supports facilitated communication user in the development of protest strategies.	1. Demonstrates situations in which protest from the facilitated communication user would be useful.	Supervision; Crossley, 1996
	2. Negotiates the use of protest strategies with the facilitated communication user.	Supervision

Advanced

General Competency	Specific Skills	Resources
1. Negotiates with facilitated communication user strategies for message construction and clarification	1. Uses feedback phrases such as "that's not clear to me," and "can you rephrase that?"	Supervision; Schubert, 1993

2. Negotiates with facilitated communication user strategies for regulating communication (e.g. controlling topic)	1. Makes debriefing of interactions with the facilitated communication user and planning for greater user control of interactions a regular part of communication sessions and ongoing portfolio.	Supervision; Broderick and Hendrickson, 1999
3. Supports the facilitated communication user in the development of message-passing strategies	1. Introduces message-passing as a set of skills rather than an adversarial or testing situation	Supervision; Crossley, 1997
	2. Negotiates with facilitated communication user and implements routine for practicing and problem-solving message-passing skills	Supervision; Crossley, 1997

Emotional Support

Beginner

General Competency	Specific Skills	Resources
1. Provides encouragement.	1. Uses supportive language.	Teaching Beginner Skills training
	2. Expresses confidence.	Teaching Beginner Skills training
2. Provides positive emotional environment for communication.	1. Respects individual's needs for personal space and other environmental needs.	Supervision
	2. Allows facilitated communication user time to begin, form and finish communication.	Shevin, 1993
3. Values and honors the facilitated communication user's messages.	1. Provides active listening and feedback; follows through on, or acknowledges requests.	Supervision
4. Demonstrates good listening skills.	1. Engages in the practices of respectful listening.	Shevin, 199; Lovett, 1996
	2. Responds to the individual, behaviorally and verbally, in a non-judgmental way.	Shevin, 1999

Intermediate

General Competency	Specific Skills	Resources
1. Develops tools for supporting the facilitated Supervision communication user's emotional balance.	1. Checks in with facilitated communication user about his or her emotional state, and how it relates to specific activities and behavioral indicators.	Supervision
	2. Negotiates with facilitated communication user to develop strategies for maintaining active participation, decreasing anxiety, etc.	Supervision
2. Moves beyond choices to fostering decision-making and planning.	1. Develops and supports an ongoing planning process with the facilitated communication user.	Supervision
	2. Negotiates to support planning and decision-making with other individuals who support the facilitated communication user.	Supervision

General Competency	Specific Skills	Resources
3. Supports facilitated communication user's assertiveness.	1. Encourages and supports facilitated communication user in expressing dissenting opinions, disagreeing, arguing, initiating action, etc.	Supervision
4. Gives undivided attention to facilitated communication user during the communication process.	1. Structures the environment and the schedule to eliminate distractors and competing time pressures.	Supervision

Advanced

General Competency	Specific Skills	Resources
1. Displays reciprocal behavior.	1. Negotiates with facilitated communication user procedures for shared use of time, agenda-setting, etc.	Shevin, 1993; Shevin, 1999
2. Develops role as ally or advocate.	1. Participates in person-centered planning, other planning and social activities as a communication ally.	Shevin, 1999

Monitoring and Feedback

Beginner

General Competency	Specific Skills	Resources
1. Understand importance of monitoring eye movements.	1. Describes connection among looking at the keyboard, fc user self-monitoring, and movement toward physical independence.	Biklen, 1992; Crossley 1994
	2. Understands and implements strategies supporting facilitated communication user's looking at the display.	Crossley 1994
	3. Can describe a facilitated communication user's particular looking strategies.	Beginner Skills training; Supervision
2. Understands importance of providing feedback about misconstruction.	1. Displays ability to provide feedback when messages are unclear or unconventionally constructed in supportive, non-judgmental manner.	Supervision
3. Recognizes relationship between body movement and ability to type.	1. Monitors for appropriate positioning at initiation of typing.	Supervision
	2. Monitors continuously for appropriate positioning, fatigue, etc. throughout session.	Supervision
	3. Recognizes movement accommodations characteristic of people with movement differences.	Supervision

Intermediate and Advanced

General Competency	Specific Skills	Resources
1. Promotes decision-making by facilitated communication user in message construction.	1. Negotiates with facilitated communication user concerning issues of clarity, conventionality, and ease of construction.	Crossley, 1994, Supervision

2. Negotiates with facilitated communication user strategies for monitoring own output.	1. Describes monitoring facilitator is currently engaged in, and negotiates shift to facilitated communication user's assuming responsibility for monitoring.	Supervision

Documentation

Beginning

General Competency	Specific Skills	Resources
1. Understands the importance of documenting the user's progress.	1. Identifies basic information that should be included in documentation, including examples of informal validation.	Supervision

Intermediate

General Competency	Specific Skills	Resources
1. Can identify and document progress in facilitated communication user's skill development.	1. Documents appropriate examples highlighting facilitated communication user's progress.	Portfolio form (ICI Staff, 1999) Appendix 2 below
	2. Provides opportunity for facilitated communication user to collaborate in documentation.	Portfolio form (ICI Staff, 1999) Appendix 2 below

Advanced

General Competency	Specific Skills	Resources
1. Understands various approaches to establishing authorship.	1. Negotiates and implements ongoing plan for practicing and demonstrating authorship with facilitated communication user.	Biklen and Cardinal, 1997; Crossley, 1997

Fostering Independence

Beginner

General Competency	Specific Skills	Resources
1. Understands independence as the ultimate goal of training.	1. Describes the typical progress of facilitated communication users toward independence, and the experience of individuals who have become substantially independent.	Intro. Day 1; Watts, 1994
2. Understands the relationship between neuromotor issues and the movement toward independence.	1. Describes the motor concerns for which facilitated communication is an accommodation, and the procedures for fading support for individuals experiencing those concerns.	Teaching Beginner Skills Training; Supervision

3. Establishes "vision for independence."	1. Converses with facilitated communication user concerning his/her independence goals, and identifies long-term objectives.	Watts, 1994; Supervision

Intermediate

General Competency	Specific Skills	Resources
1. Involves related therapies that support work toward independence.	1. Identifies appropriate ancillary therapies and consults with appropriate practitioners.	Crossley, 1994; Schubert, 1993; Williams, 1996; Supervision
2. Explores changes in support with facilitated communication user.	1. Promotes facilitated communication user pulling back on own.	Supervision
	2. Moves from backward pressure to light touch.	Supervision
	3. Negotiates for, and provides regularly scheduled opportunities for practice that promotes independence.	Supervision
3. Understands variety of ways of changing and fading support.	1. Experiments with alternative approaches to both provide minimal support currently needed, and continually fade support and promote facilitated communication user's control.	Crossley 1994; Supervision; Watts, 1994

Advanced

General Competency	Specific Skills	Resources
1. Makes a plan for working toward independence with the facilitated communication user and support team.	1. Develops, monitors, evaluates effectiveness, and adjusts the plan as needed.	Supervision

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Appendix II: Supervision Checklist

Person being supervised: Date Checklist initiated:

Supervisor's Name	From (date) to (date)	Supervisor's Name	From (date) to (date)

Beginning Competencies

History and Background

General Competency	Specific Skills	Date Demonstrated	How Evaluated	Follow-up Plan
1. Understands and can describe the development of the method	1. Is familiar with Crossley and MacDonald's work in Australia, and with Crossley's subsequent work.			
	2. Knows of independent discoveries of FC in various parts			

Neuromotor Competencies

General Competency	Specific Skills	Date Demonstrated	How Evaluated	Follow-up Plan
1.Understands movement differences and their relationship to FC.	1. Understands basic concept of apraxia			
	2. Understands seating and positioning issues			
	3. Understands hand function issues			

General Competency	Specific Skills	Date Demonstrated	How Evaluated	Follow-up Plan
	4. Understands and can explain relationship between movement concerns and the utility of FC for an individual			
	5. Understands the concept of accommodation and recognizes the need to make changes			
2. Understands processing issues and their relationship to FC	1. Understands sensory integration issues			

Physical Support

General Competency	Specific Skills	Date Demonstrated	How Evaluated	Follow-up Plan
1. Provides minimum effective level of support	1. Positions self, FC user, and devices so facilitator can provide good support for FC user, monitor eyes, keyboard, positioning, etc.			
	2. Provides constant backward pressure as the FC user moves hand toward keyboard			
	3. Cues FC user to return to neutral position above keyboard for each letter typed			
2. Changes support as needed	1. As FC user gains more control through the session, the facilitator decreases backward pressure and shifts point of support as appropriate			
	2. Facilitator negotiates decreased support with FC user if the FC user attempts to maintain greater support than needed.			
	3. Greater support provided, in conjunction with clarification strategies, when typing becomes unclear.			

Behavioral Supports

General Competency	Specific Skills	Date Demonstrated	How Evaluated	Follow-up Plan
1. Sees behavior as communication	1. Recognizes the contributions of both positive and negative behaviors to communication.			
2. Is able to hypothesize the intent of the behavior as seen from the FC user's perspective	1. Is able to suggest to the FC user, for confirmation or further clarification, the possible meanings of a specific behavior.			
1. Is able to suggest to the FC user, for confirmation or further clarification, the possible meanings of a specific behavior.	1. Tracks patterns of behavior, and decides what to attend to and what to ignore.			

Communicative Supports

General Competency	Specific Skills	Date Demonstrated	How Evaluated	Follow-up Plan
1. Sees behavior as communication	1. Recognizes the contributions of both positive and negative behaviors to communication.			
2. Is able to hypothesize the intent of the behavior as seen from the FC user's perspective	1. Is able to suggest to the FC user, for confirmation or further clarification, the possible meanings of a specific behavior.			
1. Is able to suggest to the FC user, for confirmation or further clarification, the possible meanings of a specific behavior.	1. Tracks patterns of behavior, and decides what to attend to and what to ignore.			

Emotional Supports

General Competency	Specific Skills	Date Demonstrated	How Evaluated	Follow-up Plan
1. Develops tools for supporting the FC user's emotional balance.	1. Checks in with FC user about his or her emotional state, and how it relates to specific activities and behavioral indicators.			
	2. Negotiates with FC user to develop strategies for maintaining active participation, decreasing anxiety, etc.			
2. Moves beyond choices to fostering decision-making and planning.	1. Develops and supports an ongoing planning process with the FC user.			
	2. Negotiates to support planning and decision-making with other individuals who support the FC user.			
3. Supports FC user's assertiveness.	1. Encourages and supports FC user in expressing dissenting opinions, disagreeing, arguing, initiating action, etc.			
4. Gives undivided attention to FC user during the communication process.	1. Structures the environment and the schedule to eliminate distractors and competing time pressures.			

Monitoring and Feedback

General Competency	Specific Skills	Date Demonstrated	How Evaluated	Follow-up Plan
1. Promotes decision-making by FC user in message construction.	1. Negotiates with FC user concerning issues of clarity, conventionality, and ease of construction.			
2. Negotiates with FC user strategies for monitoring own output.	1. Describes monitoring facilitator is currently engaged in, and negotiates shift to FC user's assuming responsibility for monitoring.			

Documentation

General Competency	Specific Skills	Date Demonstrated	How Evaluated	Follow-up Plan
1. Can identify and document progress in FC user's skill development	1. Documents appropriate examples highlighting FC user's progress.			
	2. Provides opportunity for FC user to collaborate in documentation.			

Fostering Independence

General Competency	Specific Skills	Date Demonstrated	How Evaluated	Follow-up Plan
1. Involves related therapies that support work toward independence.	1. Identifies appropriate ancillary therapies and consults with appropriate practitioners.			
2. Explores changes in support with FC user.	1. Promotes FC user pulling back on own.			
	2. Moves from backward pressure to light touch.			
	3. Negotiates for, and provides regularly scheduled opportunities for practice that promotes independence.			
3. Understands variety of ways of changing and fading support	1. Experiments with alternative approaches to both provide minimal support currently needed, and continually fade support and promote FC user's control.			

Advanced Competencies

Neuromotor Concepts

General Competency	Specific Skills	Date Demonstrated	How Evaluated	Follow-up Plan
1. Is able to teach others about accommodations.	1. Explains rationale and demonstrates applications.			
2. Explores strategies for FC user providing own accommodations.	1. Helps FC user discover and use own rhythmic movement for accessing communication device.			

Physical Support

General Competency	Specific Skills	Date Demonstrated	How Evaluated	Follow-up Plan
1. Explores new strategies, establishes priorities, and sets goals for reducing physical supports.	1. Develops a written plan of goals and procedures for reducing physical supports, in conjunction with the FC user, which becomes a part of the FC user's portfolio.			

Behavioral Supports

General Competency	Specific Skills	Date Demonstrated	How Evaluated	Follow-up Plan
1. Is able to teach others about behavioral supports and accommodations.	1. Is able to teach others about behavioral supports and accommodations.			
1. Describes strategies, models, and what to do for others.	1. Describes strategies, models and what to do for others.			

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General Competency	Specific Skills	Date Demonstrated	How Evaluated	Follow-up Plan
2. Works in collaboration with FC user to support behavioral changes; negotiates with fc user concerning incompatible behaviors.	2. Works in collaboration with FC user to support behavioral changes; negotiates with fc user concerning incompatible behaviors.			

Communicative Supports

General Competency	Specific Skills	Date Demonstrated	How Evaluated	Follow-up Plan
1. Negotiates with FC user strategies for message construction and clarification.	1. Uses feedback phrases such as "that's not clear to me," and "can you rephrase that?"			
2. Negotiates with FC user strategies for regulating communication (e.g. controlling topic).	1. Makes debriefing of interactions with the FC user and planning for greater FC user control of interactions a regular part of communication sessions and ongoing portfolio.			
3. Supports the FC user in the development of message-passing	1. Introduces message-passing as a set of skills rather than an adversarial or testing situation. strategies.			
	2. Negotiates with FC user and implements routine for practicing and problem-solving message-passing skills.			

Emotional Supports

General Competency	Specific Skills	Date Demonstrated	How Evaluated	Follow-up Plan
1. Displays reciprocal behavior.	1. Negotiates with FC user procedures for shared used of time, agenda-setting, etc.			
2. Develops role as ally or advocate.	1. Participates in person-centered planning, other planning and social activities as a communication ally.			

Documentation

General Competency	Specific Skills	Date Demonstrated	How Evaluated	Follow-up Plan
1. Understands various approaches to establishing authorship.	1. Negotiates and implements ongoing plan for practicing and demonstrating authorship with FC user.			

Independence

General Competency	Specific Skills	Date Demonstrated	How Evaluated	Follow-up Plan
1. Makes a plan for working toward independence with the FC user and support team.	1. Develops, monitors, evaluates effectiveness, and adjusts the plan as needed.			

Appendix III: FC User Skill Building Profile

Date: _____

Facilitator's name: _____

FC User's name: _____

How long have facilitator/FC User been working together? _____

Describe physical support provided:

Describe device used:

Describe positioning used for FC:

Describe level of communication (single word, open communication, etc.):

In the comments section, identify significant positive MASTERED or negative factors, FC user's experience with other facilitators, etc.

Skill	Level	Description	Date Mastered	Comments
Accurate Pointing 1	Beginning	1a. Develops a consistent approach to the target.		
	Intermediate	1b. Shows increased control in selecting the target, with less support.		
	Advanced	1c. Can make adjustments in movement to the target.		
Accurate Pointing 2	Beginning	2a. Consistently selects target accurately.		
	Intermediate / Advanced	2b/c. Selects single targets independently.		
Finger Isolation 1	Beginning	1a. Develops ability to isolate index finger during movement to the target.		
	Intermediate	1b. Consistently isolated index finger during the whole process of pointing.		
	Advanced	1c. Isolates index finger during facilitation with less support.		
Finger Isolation 2	All Levels	2a/b/c. Isolates finger in readiness to point.		
Body Control 1	Beginning	1a. Shows stability through hip and trunk areas, with support.		
	Intermediate	1b. Shows stability through hip and trunk areas, with minimal support.		
	Advanced	1c. Can maintain hip and trunk stability with minimal support while using FC in various positions.		
Body Control 2	Beginning	2a. Can vary body position for facilitation, with support.		
	Intermediate / Advanced	2b/c. Can vary body position for facilitation, with minimal or no support		
Hand Control 1	Beginning	1a. Develops stable arm/hand posture during movement, with support.		
	Intermediate	1b. Develops stable arm/hand posture during movement, with minimal support.		
	Advanced	1c. Uses stable arm/hand posture consistently during FC, with minimal or no support.		

Hand Control 2	Beginning	2a. Develops good tone during movement, with support.		
	Intermediate	2b. Develops good tone during movement, with minimal support.		
	Advanced	2c. Uses good tone consistently during FC, with minimal or no support.		
Looking Strategy 1	Beginning	1a. Develops consistent strategy for looking at target, with frequent cuing or other support.		
	Intermediate / Advanced	1b/c. Maintains use of looking strategy without support.		
Looking Strategy 2	Beginning	2a. Develops use of frontal vision for looking at target, with support.		
	Intermediate	2b. Uses frontal vision during FC with minimal support.		
	Advanced	2c. Uses primarily frontal vision during FC, without support.		
Control of Movement 1	Beginning	1a. Develops rhythmic movement, with support.		
	Intermediate	1b. Develops rhythmic movement, with minimal support.		
	Advanced	1c. Is able to establish own pace.		
Control of Movement 2	Beginning	2a. Develops slow, even movement to the target with facilitator resistance.		
	Intermediate	2b. Maintains slow even movement when support is changed to light touch.		
	Advanced	2c. Is able to change direction during movement toward the keyboard.		
Control of Movement 2	Beginning / Intermediate	3a/b. Develops ability to pull away from target, with minimal support.		
	Advanced	3c. Is able to adjust pointing.		
Message Formulation 1	Beginning	1a. Consistently uses spaces and punctuation, with support.		
	Intermediate	1b. Consistently uses spaces and punctuation without support.		
	Advanced	1c. Adjusts message formulation to varying communication situations.		

Message Formulation 2	Beginning	2a. Shows ability to use a variety of expressions		
	Intermediate / Advanced	2b/c. Develops ability to focus on communication.		
Message Formulation 3	Intermediate	3b. Develops strategies for word retrieval.		
	Advanced	3c. Independently uses word retrieval strategies.		
Correction Strategies 1	Beginning	1a. Recognizes mistakes made during facilitation.		
	Intermediate	1b. Uses delete key, without cuing.		
	Advanced	1c. Consistently corrects mistakes spontaneously.		
Correction Strategies 2	Beginning	2a. Uses delete key, with cuing.		
	Intermediate	2b. Uses auditory or visual feedback from device to make necessary changes.		
Clarification Strategies	Beginning	1a. Responds to specific clarification questions.		
	Intermediate	1b. Responds to open-ended requests for clarification.		
	Advanced	1c. Directs/redirects facilitator in the process of message formulation.		
Protest Strategies 1	Beginning	1a. Disagrees with facilitators ideas.		
	Intermediate	1b. Learns specific strategy in response to facilitator influence.		
	Advanced	1c. Responds spontaneously to facilitator influence.		
Protest Strategies 2	Beginning	2a. Objects to specific actions of the facilitator.		
Monitoring 1	Beginning	1a. Responds to suggestions regarding clarity of the message.		
	Intermediate	1b. Makes changes in the message without suggestions.		
Monitoring 2	Beginning	2a. Responds to suggestions regarding the process.		
	Intermediate	2b. Monitors the message with minimal support.		
	Advanced	2c. Adjusts the process spontaneously.		

Independent Pointing	Beginning	1a. Uses independent pointing for a single letter, word, or object.		
	Intermediate	1b. Uses independent pointing for typing specific words.		
	Advanced	1c. Uses independent pointing spontaneously and extensively.		
Message Passing	Beginning	1a. Can pass meaningful information incidentally.		
	Intermediate	1b. Can convey accurate information in response to specific questions.		
	Advanced	1c. Can pass information in a formal, structured, simple blind condition.		
Initiation 1	Beginning	1a. Shows readiness to start through facial expression, hand or body posture		
	Intermediate	1b. Develops a variety of initiation strategies.		
	Advanced	1c. Spontaneously uses clearly understood strategies to initiate communication.		
Initiation 2	Intermediate	2b. Combines facilitation with other means of expression.		
	Advanced	2c. Consistently uses combined strategies to initiate communication.		