

Overview of Level IV



Conventional Communication

Individuals at Level IV intentionally use conventional pre-symbolic behaviors to communicate. Communicative behaviors are pre-symbolic because they do not involve any sort of symbol; they are conventional because they are socially acceptable and we continue to use them to accompany our language as we mature. Conventional communication behaviors can include: smiling, pointing, waving, high-five, looking intentionally, thumbs up, vocalizations (uh-oh, uh-huh, etc.) The meanings of some gestures may be unique to the culture in which they are used. Many of the behaviors at this level require good visual skills and may not be useful for individuals with severe vision impairment. Communicators at this level attend to the communication of others.

Messages communicated at Level IV include:

- Refuse: Protest, Refuse or reject something
- Obtain: Request more of an action or object, Request a new object or action, Make choices
- Social: Request attention, Show affection, Greets people, Offers things or shares, Directs someone's attention to something, Uses polite social forms
- Information: Answers yes and no questions, Asks questions

Messages at Level IV are communicated through:

- Unconventional gestures and vocalizations continue to be used (body movements, facial expressions)
- Conventional gestures and vocalizations:
 - » Look back and forth between you and object, beckons you, point, extend open palm, give unwanted object to you, nod or shake the head, kiss/hug/pat, raise hand, use vocal intonations (uh-uh, question sound) waving hello or goodbye, shrug

Partner

Goals for the Communication Partners

- » Teach 1:1 correspondence between symbols and referents
- » Shape non-conventional gestures into conventional gestures and/or target symbol use
- » Teach conventional gestures across all communicative intents (refuse, obtain, social, and information)
- » Transition conventional gestures to symbols (Level V). Symbols may be concrete (Level V) or abstract (Level VI), depending upon the needs of the individual

Individual

Goals for the Individual from Communication in Action

- » Individual will expand the number of messages and intents communicated through conventional communication
- » Individual will begin to pair a symbol to a conventional communication gesture in familiar routine or activity
- » Individual will increase the number of communication partners to whom conventional gestures are used

- » Individual will increase the number of environments and routines where conventional gestures are used to communicate
- » Individual will use conventional gestures to communicate messages in familiar routines with reduced number of prompts

Level IV Examples: from Communication in Action

Goal 1: Student will gain a partner's attention to reinstate, reject, make a choice, or request a new topic.

Goal 2: Student will increase communicative intents through gestures or emerging symbolic communication across a variety of partners.

Goal 3: Student will communicate using more conventional gestures within motoric or sensory means.

Goal 4: Student will demonstrate 1:1 correspondence between symbol and referent (child will match object symbol to its corresponding real object).

Intervention Principles at Level IV

- Intentional communicative acts are more likely to occur:
 - » in the context of highly preferred activities; and/or,
 - » when the individual is in close proximity to a communication partner who is responsive.
- As symbols are introduced, remember to be responsive (supportive) to all of the individual's gestures or signals.
- Individuals must have access to symbols throughout the day.
- The individual must learn to touch, look at, reach toward, point to, etc. symbols.
- Remember to use speech when modeling along with the individual's mode of communication. (ex. signs, pictures, objects).

Communication Level	Continuing Strategies	Strategies to Introduce	Tools
Level 4 Conventional Pre-symbolic Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Routines • Wait Time • Touch Cues • Object Cues for Receptive Communication • Modeling • Continue at Consideration • Development of Symbolization • Gaining Attention • Choice Making • Anticipation Calendar 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing Conventional Gestures • Pairing gestures/speech with symbols 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My Cue Dictionary • Communication Opportunities Data Sheet Embedding Goals Into Routines • My Signal Dictionary • Calendar Planning Tool

Essential Takeaways Level IV

- Shape unconventional communication behaviors into conventional behaviors and/or target symbol use.
- Partners' repeated interpretations of the individual's behaviors, over time, will shape conventionality or the development of symbolization.
- Consistently respond to each individual's potential communicative behavior in a predictable way.
- Intervention is integrated into the typical routines and provides the opportunity to communicate at all times.
- Ensure all partners know the meaning of the individual's unconventional communicative behaviors and how to model the desired response.