



## **SCERTS in ACTION** *Implementation Steps*



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## SCERTS in Action

### *Getting started and designing a plan* (updated October 2015)

SCERTS is a comprehensive framework that includes a formal assessment process for determining a child's current levels of performance, monitoring progress over time, identifying educational objectives, and designing programming for the child, the family and the team.

Getting started can be guided by the following priorities:

- Priority #1 – Writing goals** that are most critical for a child's current developmental stage
- Priority #2 – Identifying supports** to ensure that the child has the supports he or she needs within daily routines
- Priority #3 – Designing a systematic plan** that ensures that the child is actively engaged across the day.
- Priority #4 - Formal assessment** and meaningful measurement of progress over time

To get started with priorities #1 – priorities #3, the following steps can guide the process:

- 1) **Determine a child's developmental stage** – Use the *SCERTS Worksheet for Determining Stage*
- 2) **Observe the child in a targeted activity** – Use the *SCERTS Practice Principles Checklist* and *Appreciative Inquiry Framework*
- 3) **Select up to 4 educational objectives** – Reference the *Frequently Used Goals & Objectives* and the *SCERTS Priorities Charts*
- 4) **Design a SCERTS Educational Planning Grid** – Use the *SCERTS Educational Planning Grid*



## Worksheet for Determining Communication Stage

Child's name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Does the child use **ALL** of the following?

- 1a. Does the child use **at least 3 different words or phrases** (spoken, signed, pictures, written words, or other symbolic system)?
- 1b. Does the child use at least 3 words or phrases **referentially** (i.e., to refer to specific objects, people, or activities)?
- 1c. Does the child use at least 3 words or phrases **with communicative intent** (i.e., by coordinating the words or phrases with gestures or gaze for a communicative purpose)?
- 1d. Does the child use at least 3 words or phrases **regularly** (i.e., often, not just on a rare occasion)?

**No:**  
Use Social Partner stage forms.

**Yes:** Go to Question 2.

2. Does the child use **ALL** of the following?

- 2a. Does the child use **at least 100 different words or phrases** (spoken, signed, pictures, written words, or other symbolic system)?
- 2b. Does the child use at least 100 words or phrases **referentially** (i.e., to refer to specific objects, people, or activities)?
- 2c. Does the child use at least 100 words or phrases **with communicative intent** (i.e., by coordinating the words or phrases with gestures or gaze for a communicative purpose)?
- 2d. Does the child use at least 100 words or phrases **regularly** (i.e., often)?
- 2e. Does the child use **at least 20 different word combinations that are creative** (i.e., not just exact imitations of phrases)?

**No:**  
Use Language Partner stage forms.

**Yes:**  
Use Conversational Partner stage forms.



**Developmental Stages of Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD);**  
*Impact of Neurodevelopment and Critical Priorities on Social Communication Development*

Children with ASD face different neurodevelopmental challenges as they progress through developmental stages. Critical priorities at each stage should be considered, as these areas are often barriers toward shifting developmental stages. The following core challenges and critical priorities for each developmental stage are outline below:

**Social Partner Stage / Pre-symbolic;** Children with ASD at this stage often do not find initiations with social stimuli intrinsically rewarding, as it is difficult to predict that a caregiver or teacher is a source of assistance; thus, even facial and gestural forms of communication are initially delayed. When they do emerge, gestures tend to involve physical manipulation (e.g., pulling a caregiver’s hand) rather than using a gesture to send a “shared message” to others (e.g., giving, pointing, showing, pushing away, waving, and a head nod / headshake).

**Critical priorities:**

- **Increasing functional, spontaneous communication**, as a high rate of nonverbal communication (i.e., 2 communications per minute in highly motivating situations) = language acquisition and social relationships.
- **Increasing conventional gestures** that have a shared meaning (e.g., giving, pointing, pushing away, head nods, and head shakes).

**Language Partner Stage / Emerging language;** Children with ASD at this stage often show a preference for object labels (i.e., nouns), i.e., nonsocial language forms, versus more social language, namely subjects (i.e., people’s names) and verbs (e.g., action words). This is likely due to a limited appreciation of the intentions of others and limited gaze shifting toward people and between people and objects. As subject + verb word combinations are predictive of creative language acquisition, limitations in this semantic relationship lead to a reliance on object labels and rote sentence structures

**Critical priorities:**

- **Increasing range of spontaneous communication involving others** (e.g., requesting actions and social routines, commenting on actions, and sharing experiences with others).
- **Increasing range of word combinations for subject + verb** (e.g., “Sarah open the cookies,” “Jason shoot baskets,” “Jamie pour the juice.”)

**Conversational Partner Stage;** Children with ASD at this stage continue to show difficulty with predicting the intentions of others, a challenge which impacts the development of self-efficacy as a communicator and the ability to establish and maintain peer relationships. This challenge also limits the development of more sophisticated syntax to clarify intentions, knowing how to pick topics, when to initiate, how to balance conversational turns, and collaborating and negotiating with others..

**Critical priorities:**

- **Increasing spontaneous communication with one’s peers and a sense of self-efficacy.**
- **Increasing awareness of social norms of conversation** (e.g., balancing turns, vocal volume, proximity, conversational timing, and topic selection).

# Social Partner Stage – Outcomes & Supports

I am using body language, gestures, and facial expressions to communicate  
Here are some outcomes I can achieve and supports I need:

I can **spontaneously request desired items** (JA4.1) and **social games** (JA5.2) when my partners **entice me** with developmentally appropriate **hands-on activities** (LS4.6) like cause-effect, building, cooking, messy play, music and art and **encourage my initiations** by giving me a lot of chances to communicate (IS2.2).

### Social Communication Outcomes

JA – Joint Attention – Why I am communicating

SU – Symbol Use – How I am communicating



I can **use giving or pointing gestures** (SU4.3) when my partners **offer me choices of desired objects in see-through containers** (LS2.1) and **respond to my nonverbal signals** to foster my sense of competence (IS1.3). When I am first starting out, my partners might respond to my preference by following just my gaze and then when I touch, point or give the item to them.

### Emotional Regulation Outcomes

MR – Mutual Regulation – How I cope with others' help

SR – Self Regulation – How I am coping on my own

**Transactional Support** – What my partners do to help

IS – Interpersonal Support – How my partners change their communication for me

LS – Learning Support – How my environment can be changed to help me

I can **share emotion to seek comfort or engagement** (MR3.1 and MR3.2) and **choose coping strategies** (MR2.6) when my partners **recognize my signals** and offer support (IS1.5) and **model hands-on coping strategies** (IS7.4)

I can **use behaviour to self-regulate to make a transition** between activities on my own (SR3.4) and **behaviour to soothe and alert myself** (SR2.3) when my partners give me **concrete objects to hold related to upcoming activities** (LS3.3) and **provide access to materials that serve as sources of regulation** (LS2.4).



# Language Partner Stage – Outcomes & Supports

I am using single words and brief phrases to communicate with speech, signs or pictures.  
Here are some outcomes I can achieve and supports I need:

I can **spontaneously initiate and keep interactions going** (JA1.3) when my partners **entice me** with developmentally appropriate **hands-on activities** (LS4.6) like cause-effect, building, sports, cooking, messy play, music and art and **encourage my initiations** by giving me a lot of chances to communicate (IS2.2.)

## Social Communication Outcomes

JA – Joint Attention – Why I am communicating

SU – Symbol Use – How I am communicating



I can **use word combinations with people's names and verbs** (SU5.6) when my partners **give me pictures with people's names and verbs** and sentence building templates (LS2.1) and **model people's names and verbs** (IS1.3).

I can **use language to self-regulate to make a transition** between activities on my own (SR3.4) and **language to talk through the steps of a task** (SR3.4) when my partners **give me visuals for smooth transitions to upcoming activities** (LS3.3) and **visuals to define steps within each task** (LS3.1).

## Emotional Regulation Outcomes

MR – Mutual Regulation – How I cope with others' help

SR – Self Regulation – How I am coping on my own

**Transactional Support** – What my partners do to help

IS – Interpersonal Support – How my partners change their communication for me

LS – Learning Support – How my environment can be changed to help me

I can **use language to share emotion (MR1.2) and use language to request coping strategies** (MR3.6) when my partners **give me visuals to express my emotions** (LS2.4) and **model language for emotional expression** (IS7.1). I use my emotion “key ring” to remember how to share emotions and what to ask for.

# Conversational Partner Stage – Outcomes & Supports

I am using creative language to communicate and I am learning how to succeed in a range of social settings.  
 Here are some outcomes I can achieve and supports I need:

I can **share intentions for social functions** such as greetings, turn taking, and calling out for others (JA3.2) and I can **share experiences** with others by providing information about immediate, past and future events (JA4.1) when my partners infuse motivating topics (LS4.7) and provide visuals (LS3.6) for success in group activities.

I can **use language to request assistance from others** (e.g., help, breaks, and other coping strategies) (MR4.3) when my partners give me visuals to regulate my emotions (LS2.4) and model language for emotional expression, negotiation, and coping (IS7.1).

## Social Communication Outcomes

JA – Joint Attention – Why I am communicating

SU – Symbol Use – How I am communicating



I can follow social conventions to use **appropriate vocal volume, intonation, and body proximity** (SU4.3, SU4.4) when my partners provide visuals for understanding social norms (LS2.2) and provide guidance for interpreting other's thoughts (IS5.5).

I can **use language to identify and reflect on coping strategies** (SR4.5) that may be helpful in future situations (e.g., writing out the steps of a task, asking for help, collaborating with others) when my partners give me visuals to define steps within each task (LS3.1) and model appropriate coping strategies (IS7.4).

## Emotional Regulation Outcomes

MR – Mutual Regulation – How I cope with others' help

SR – Self Regulation – How I am coping on my own

**Transactional Support** – What my partners do to help

IS – Interpersonal Support – How my partners change their communication for me

LS – Learning Support – How my environment can be changed to help me



Frequently Used Objectives and Transactional Supports from the SCERTS® Curriculum

<b>Student Objectives: SC and ER Objectives</b> <i>Select 4 objectives</i>	<b>Accommodations: Transactional Supports (TS)</b> <i>Select 4 supports</i>
<p><b><u>Social Partner stage</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Student will initiate bids for interaction (JA1.2)</li> <li>o Student will request desired food or objects (JA4.1)</li> <li>o Student will request social games (JA5.2)</li> <li>o Student imitates familiar actions when elicited by social partners (SU1.2)</li> <li>o Student uses conventional gestures (giving, pointing) (SU4.3)</li> <li>o Student will soothe when comforted by partners (MR2.1)</li> <li>o Student will choose coping strategies offered by partners (hands-on materials, holding a comforting object, a rocking chair during circle time) (MR2.6)</li> <li>o Student shares negative emotion to seek comfort (MR3.1)</li> <li>o Student will use behaviors modeled by partners to regulate (SR2.3)</li> <li>o Student will use behaviors to self-regulate during transitions (e.g., movement, holding an object from upcoming activity) (SR3.4)</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Language Partner stage:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Student will initiate &amp; engage in extended interactions (JA1.3)</li> <li>o Student will comment on actions or events (JA6.2)</li> <li>o Student will use a variety of relational words (actions, modifiers) (SU5.5)</li> <li>o Student will use a variety of word combinations (SU5.6)</li> <li>o Student uses words / symbols to express emotion (MR1.2)</li> <li>o Student will choose coping strategies offered by partners (MR2.6)</li> <li>o Student request help when frustrated (MR3.3)</li> <li>o Student uses language to request regulating activities (MR3.6)</li> <li>o Student will use language modeled by partners to regulate (SR3.3)</li> <li>o Student uses language / pictures to engage productively in an extended activity (following a within-task schedule) (SR3.4)</li> <li>o Student uses language / pictures to self-regulate during transitions (SR4.6)</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Conversational Partner stage examples:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Student will monitor the attentional focus of a social partner (JA1.1)</li> <li>o Student will share intentions for social interaction (e.g., greetings, turn taking, calling attention) (JA3.2)</li> <li>o Student provides information about immediate, past, or future events (JA3.3)</li> <li>o Student uses appropriate body posture and proximity for the context (SU4.3)</li> <li>o Student uses appropriate volume and intonation for the context (SU4.4)</li> <li>o Student uses a variety of sentence constructions (SU5.4)</li> <li>o Student responds to coping strategies offered by partners (MR2.6)</li> <li>o Students asks for help, a break, or coping strategies from others (MR4.3)</li> <li>o Student uses socially appropriate behavioral coping strategies (SR2.2)</li> <li>o Student uses language modeled by partners to self-regulate (SR3.5)</li> <li>o Student identifies and reflects on appropriate coping strategies (SR4.5)</li> <li>o Student uses metacognitive strategies to self-regulate during transitions (planning and preparing ahead for routines and changes) (SR5.6)</li> </ul> <p>Key:</p> <p>SC – Social Communication                  JA – Joint Attention                  SU – Symbol Use                  ER – Emotional Regulation                  MR – Mutual Regulation                  SR – Self-Regulation</p>	<p><b>Designing Meaningful &amp; Developmentally Sensible Activities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Ensure functional application is clear (LS4.7)</li> <li>o Incorporate student’s preferred learning modalities (e.g., visual, hands-on, music, rhythm, movement) (LS4.3)</li> <li>o Design activities to be developmentally sensible (LS4.2 &amp; LS4.6)</li> <li>o Infuse motivating materials &amp; topics in activities (LS4.7)</li> <li>o Adjust social complexity to support interaction (LA4.1)</li> <li>o Provide information to support emotional regulation (IS1.6)</li> <li>o Respond to student’s signals to foster a sense of competence (IS1.3)</li> <li>o Provide a balance between initiated and respondent turns (IS2.3)</li> <li>o Model appropriate coping strategies (IS7.4)</li> <li>o Provide visuals for emotional identification (LS2.3)</li> <li>o Provide visuals for regulatory strategy choices (LS2.4)</li> </ul> <p><b>Establishing Predictability</b>                  (LS1, LS2 and LS3)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Use visual support to enhance smooth transitions (LS3.3)</li> <li>o Define clear beginning and ending to activity (LS1.1)</li> <li>o Use support to define steps within a task (LS3.1)</li> <li>o Use support to define time for completion (LS3.2)</li> <li>o Provide predictable sequence for initiation and extended interaction (partner roles) (LS4.8)</li> <li>o Offer repeated learning opportunities (LS1.4)</li> <li>o Offer varied learning opportunities (LS1.5)</li> <li>o Provide visual supports promote social understanding and expectations (LS2.2)</li> </ul> <p><b>Fostering Social Communication</b>                  (IS1, IS2, IS5, &amp; IS6)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Provide visuals for expressive communication and generative language (LS2.1)</li> <li>o Provide visuals to assist with receptive understanding (LS2.2)</li> <li>o Provide visuals to social understanding and expectations (LS2.2)</li> <li>o Provide visuals for organizational support (LS3)</li> <li>o Respond to student’s signals to foster a sense of competence (IS1.3)</li> <li>o Waits for &amp; encourages initiations (IS2.2)</li> <li>o Provide a balance between initiated and respondent turns (IS2.3)</li> <li>o Provide predictable sequence for initiation and extended interaction (partner roles) (LS4.8)</li> <li>o Provide guidance for success with peers (IS5.1)</li> <li>o Adjust complexity of language models to child’s developmental level (IS6.2)</li> </ul> <p><b>Fostering Smooth Transitions</b>                  (LS3, IS3, &amp; IS7)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Use visual support to enhance smooth transitions (LS3.3)</li> <li>o Define clear beginning and ending to activity (LS1.1)</li> <li>o Use support to define steps within a task (LS3.1)</li> <li>o Use support to define time for completion (LS3.2)</li> <li>o Infuse motivating materials &amp; topics in activities (LS4.7)</li> <li>o Alternates between movement &amp; sedentary activities as needed (LS4.9)</li> <li>o Provide information to support emotional regulation (IS1.6)</li> <li>o Provide time for student to make transition on their own (IS3.2)</li> <li>o Models appropriate coping strategies (IS7.4)</li> </ul> <p>Key:</p> <p>IS – Interpersonal Support                  LS – Learning Support</p>





### Sample SCERTS Objective & Benchmarks

After determining a child's developmental stage, objectives should be selected for that child by selecting items that are functional and meaningful, match family priorities, and meet developmental areas of need on the SCERTS assessment.

A sample objective is listed below in order to provide service providers with an example of how SCERTS objectives can be benchmarked in a child's IEP or EHCP. Please note that the following are just samples; the annual benchmarks might not be written to achieve a "2" on the SAP-Observation Assessment. Students may progress at development rates. The educational team should use judgment and may have flexibility in writing the actual IEP objective and benchmarks.

#### **SCERTS Goal – SR3.6 (Conversational Partner Stage) paired with the partner goals (LS3.1 and LS4.7)**

John will use language to talk himself through the steps of an extended activity when provided with a written schedule of steps toward completion and motivating materials (areas of interest infused within tasks) across 3 different activities and 3 different social partners in 4/5 opportunities.

Sample Benchmarks:

Benchmark #1: across 1 activity and 1 social partner in 4 out of 5 opportunities

Benchmark#2: across 2 activities and 2 social partners in 4 out of 5 opportunities

Benchmark #3: across 3 activities and at least 3 social partners in 4 out of 5 opportunities.

**Educational Planning Grid**  
**Social Partner Stage**  
**Child's Name:** George  
**Location:** School

*Sample for Discussion Purposes*

Activity/time		Educational Objectives				Transactional Supports	
Arrival/ Transitions	Initiates bids for interaction (JA1.2)	Imitates familiar actions when elicited by partners (SU1.2)	Uses conventional gestures (giving & pointing) (SU4.3)	Uses behavior to self-regulate during transitions (SR3.4)			
							<p><b>Whole Day Supports</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provide activity baskets in sequence to indicate flow of daily activities</li> <li>- Pair all transitions with the actual objects of upcoming activity</li> <li>- Ensure that each activity embeds desired sensory motor exploration and/or cause-effect element</li> </ul>
							<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- During break opportunities, offer an object (paired with a photo) to represent his rocking chair (e.g., the weighted blanket) and foster an independent transition.</li> <li>- Pair photos with actual materials to indicate transition (e.g., a basket of art supplies, a basket with see-thru container with cars for car ramp, etc.).</li> </ul>
<b>Language Arts/ Arts &amp; Crafts</b>	X	X					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Create project oriented crafts, such as gluing photos of family members into a card with matched photos (holiday theme; Thanksgiving – family sitting around table) or into a photo journal.</li> </ul>
<b>Snack</b>	X		X				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Offer see-thru containers of desired snack items (e.g., goldfish, grapes, oranges) with photo of staff member on top of jar to call attention;</li> <li>- Limit verbal prompting and respond to subtle gestural initiations for access to these (his touch to container). Ultimately, shift toward an open palm to elicit a giving gesture for the container.</li> </ul>
<b>Leisure &amp; play</b>	X		X				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Offer see-thru containers of desired objects (e.g., spinning globes, cars for car ramp, etc.) with photo of items on top of jar;</li> <li>- Limit verbal prompting and respond to subtle gestural initiations for access to these (his touch to container). Ultimately, shift toward an open palm to elicit a giving gesture for the container.</li> <li>- Pair social routines (Row your boat on sensory chair) with an object (e.g., a soft rope pull) to encourage initiation.</li> </ul>





**Sample for Discussion Purposes**

**Educational Planning Grid**  
**Language Partner Stage**  
**Child's Name: Richard**  
**Location: 1<sup>st</sup> Grade**

		Whole Day Supports				
Activity/time	Provides information about immediate, past & future events	Uses a variety of sentence constructions	Responds to strategies offered by partners to regulate arousal	Uses self-talk identify steps of extended activities	Activity Supports	
<b>Arrival &amp; Transitions</b>			X	X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Daily schedule posted on front board of classroom to help Richard predict the sequence of expected activities.</li> <li>- "Help box" on front board or document projector for each activity to facilitate more independence with predicting steps within a task.</li> <li>- Emotion key ring or visuals to remind Richard of coping strategies (e.g., "I can stretch," "I can ask for help," "I can take a break").</li> <li>- Infusing motivating and meaningful topics in activities.</li> </ul>	
<b>English Language Arts</b>	X	X			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Review daily schedule and consider any activities that may cause distress so that coping strategies can be discussed and planned in advance (and visual reminders can be created).</li> <li>- Embed "reader's theater" following Read Aloud with the class, to enable Richard to re-enact the sequence of the story as a character of that story.</li> <li>- Cartoon "story boards" can be created to depict the key scenes in a story through illustrations.</li> <li>- Provide color coded sentence assembly word banks (with index cards) to help Richard select the subject, verb phrases, and noun phrases of sentences related to topic of the day.</li> </ul>	
<b>Math</b>				X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provide math strategy "helper cards" in a basket on Richard's desk with visual reminders of how to complete math stories, use measurement tools, etc.</li> <li>- "Help box" on front board of each activity to facilitate more independence with predicting steps within a task.</li> </ul>	
<b>Snack &amp; Recess</b>	X		X		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reference an emotion key ring to help Richard predict anxiety with his peers and plan accordingly (e.g., "If we can't figure out what to play, I can reference my recess chart and find ideas," "If my friends play a game I don't like, I can....").</li> <li>- Include a photo in his lunch box about a recent past event to support initiation of topics with peers.</li> </ul>	
<b>Science</b>				X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provide a "help box" / "checklist" for cooperative science groups so that Richard can follow these steps in parallel with his peers and/or identify his role in the group.</li> <li>- Reference an emotion key ring or visual to help him plan for challenges (e.g., "If my friends touch my project, I can....")</li> </ul>	
<b>P.E.</b>		X			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- "Help box" on easel to depict the rules and to predicting steps within an activity.</li> <li>- Assign a peer buddy for Richard so that he feels more confident in new games and situations</li> </ul>	



**SCERTS Practice Principles for Success - Checklist**

**Student Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Target Activity / Subject:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Follow-up Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Describe what the student did well...**

	What supports are working	Next steps
<p><b>Visual Structure &amp; Organization</b> Is the student predicting...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>the purpose of the task</b> (<i>sensory exploration / cause &amp; effect / tied to special interests or real-life events</i>)</li> <li>• <b>the sequence of activities</b> (<i>activity baskets, photo/picture schedules, written day planner</i>)</li> <li>• <b>the steps within the activity</b> (<i>count down strips, visual timers, written help box</i>)</li> <li>• <b>their role in the activity</b> (<i>clear visuals indicate expectations, turn-taking, and roles</i>)</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Social Communication Supports</b> Is the student predicting...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>when to initiate</b> (<i>the activity includes opportunities for student participation</i>)</li> <li>• <b>what to say</b> (<i>visuals such as objects, photos, pictures, written words remind the child how to ask for help, comment, respond to questions, etc.</i>)</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Emotional Regulation</b> Is the student predicting...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>how to regulate their emotions</b> (<i>access to sensory supports, visuals choices of coping strategies</i>)</li> <li>• <b>that others are responsive and a source of emotional support</b></li> </ul>		



**SCERTS Practice Principles for Success - Checklist**

**Student Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Target Activity / Subject:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Follow-up Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Describe what the student did well...**

	What supports are working	Next steps
<p><b>Visual Structure &amp; Organization</b> Is the student predicting...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>the purpose of the task</b> (<i>sensory exploration / cause &amp; effect / tied to special interests or real-life events</i>)</li> <li>• <b>the sequence of activities</b> (<i>activity baskets, photo/picture schedules, written day planner</i>)</li> <li>• <b>the steps within the activity</b> (<i>count down strips, visual timers, written help box</i>)</li> <li>• <b>their role in the activity</b> (<i>clear visuals indicate expectations, turn-taking, and roles</i>)</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Social Communication Supports</b> Is the student predicting...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>when to initiate</b> (<i>the activity includes opportunities for student participation</i>)</li> <li>• <b>what to say</b> (<i>visuals such as objects, photos, pictures, written words remind the child how to ask for help, comment, respond to questions, etc.</i>)</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Emotional Regulation</b> Is the student predicting...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>how to regulate their emotions</b> (<i>access to sensory supports, visuals choices of coping strategies</i>)</li> <li>• <b>that others are responsive and a source of emotional support</b></li> </ul>		





**SCERTS Practice Principles for Success - Checklist**

**Student Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Target Activity / Subject:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Follow-up Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Describe what the student did well...**

	What supports are working	Next steps
<p><b>Visual Structure &amp; Organization</b> Is the student predicting...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>the purpose of the task</b> (<i>sensory exploration / cause &amp; effect / tied to special interests or real-life events</i>)</li> <li>• <b>the sequence of activities</b> (<i>activity baskets, photo/picture schedules, written day planner</i>)</li> <li>• <b>the steps within the activity</b> (<i>count down strips, visual timers, written help box</i>)</li> <li>• <b>their role in the activity</b> (<i>clear visuals indicate expectations, turn-taking, and roles</i>)</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Social Communication Supports</b> Is the student predicting...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>when to initiate</b> (<i>the activity includes opportunities for student participation</i>)</li> <li>• <b>what to say</b> (<i>visuals such as objects, photos, pictures, written words remind the child how to ask for help, comment, respond to questions, etc.</i>)</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Emotional Regulation</b> Is the student predicting...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>how to regulate their emotions</b> (<i>access to sensory supports, visuals choices of coping strategies</i>)</li> <li>• <b>that others are responsive and a source of emotional support</b></li> </ul>		



**SCERTS Practice Principles for Success - Checklist**

**Student Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Target Activity / Subject:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Follow-up Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Describe what the student did well...**

	What supports are working	Next steps
<p><b>Visual Structure &amp; Organization</b> Is the student predicting...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>the purpose of the task</b> (<i>sensory exploration / cause &amp; effect / tied to special interests or real-life events</i>)</li> <li>• <b>the sequence of activities</b> (<i>activity baskets, photo/picture schedules, written day planner</i>)</li> <li>• <b>the steps within the activity</b> (<i>count down strips, visual timers, written help box</i>)</li> <li>• <b>their role in the activity</b> (<i>clear visuals indicate expectations, turn-taking, and roles</i>)</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Social Communication Supports</b> Is the student predicting...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>when to initiate</b> (<i>the activity includes opportunities for student participation</i>)</li> <li>• <b>what to say</b> (<i>visuals such as objects, photos, pictures, written words remind the child how to ask for help, comment, respond to questions, etc.</i>)</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Emotional Regulation</b> Is the student predicting...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>how to regulate their emotions</b> (<i>access to sensory supports, visuals choices of coping strategies</i>)</li> <li>• <b>that others are responsive and a source of emotional support</b></li> </ul>		

**SCERTS Educational Planning Grid**

Child's Name:

Location:

Date:

Whole Day Supports								
Activity/time	Educational Objectives	Activity Supports						



**SCERTS Educational Planning Grid**

Child's Name:

Location:

Date:

Whole Day Supports								
Activity/time	Educational Objectives	Activity Supports						





## **SCERTS Case Study Coaching & Mentorship – Quick Reference (updated October 2015)**

### The Appreciative Inquiry Philosophy

When implementing SCERTS, the philosophy of appreciative inquiry can guide our coaching and mentorship. This philosophy is based on the premise that a collective discussion of “what’s working” in a classroom lesson fosters active engagement in the process of imagining “what could be” and a collective development of an action plan for “next steps.” This process reduces the need for an “expert” model of consultation that is based upon more coercive or persuasive mechanisms for planned change. The following guidelines are offered to foster a productive and emotionally regulating peer-to-peer coaching session:

1. **Engage in initial conversation (5 minutes):** Provide an opportunity for the teacher and/or co-teacher to share perspectives on target activity and students (e.g., the overall goals, what has worked, questions related to student active engagement)
2. **Describe the process of appreciative inquiry (5 minutes):** Beginning with a review of the instructional elements that are effective ensures that observers are focusing on successes within each activity, rather than solely looking for “deficiencies” or “problems.” We are not always “fixing” things, but rather, we are focusing on *increasing* active engagement (e.g., increasing initiation, independence, and emotional investment).
3. **Record and discuss ‘what’s working’ (10 minutes):** Use the SCERTS Practice Principles Checklist to identify “what’s working” in each section.
4. **Consider questions regarding a child’s or the groups’ level of engagement to gain consensus and agreement (5 minutes):** Consider questions such as, “Did it appear that the student had difficulty predicting....?” or “Would you agree that....?”
5. **Select the questions that are mutually agreed upon by the group.**
6. **Collaborate to discuss possible ‘next steps’ (10 minutes).** Allow wait time to ensure that the teacher and/or co-teacher initiate a collective discussion. Questions to stimulate collaboration might include, “How might we provide support for helping the students’....predict the purpose, the sequence, the steps, what to say, how to regulate his or her emotions...”
7. **Identify an action plan of next steps and who is responsible for action.**