The SCERTS Model
Introduction, Application & Assessment

Using the SCERTS framework to design programming
& monitor progress in children with Autism Spectrum Disorder

Table of Contents

Title:	**Day 1 - The SCERTS Model – An Introduction:** Using the SCERTS framework guide priorities for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder
	Day 2 -The SCERTS Model – Application & Assessment: Using the SCERTS framework to design programming in children with Autism Spectrum Disorder
Presenter:	**Emily Rubin, MS, CCC-SLP** **Co-Author, The SCERTS Model**
Host:	**Autism Independent UK**
Dates:	**25 & 26 January 2016**
Registration:	**9:00am – 9:30am**
Course Time:	**9:30am - 4:15pm**

II. Course Description

Day 1 of this course will introduce the SCERTS model, a comprehensive, multidisciplinary educational approach designed for children with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD). This model is not exclusive of other treatment approaches and methodologies, but rather provides a framework for those who are seeking guidelines for implementing a comprehensive educational plan that is based on our knowledge of the core developmental challenges faced by children with ASD, family-centered care, and our knowledge of the recommended tenets of educational programming. The model was designed to provide guidelines for helping children progress through the stages of becoming a competent social communicator. It was also designed to provide families and educational teams with the help they may need to feel successful in supporting the child. Participants of this course will learn how to determine meaningful, purposeful, and motivating goals and strategies based on a child's developmental stage, functional needs, and family priorities.

Day 2 of this course will begin with the essential priorities for applying the SCERTS scope and sequence of goals in program development, namely writing goals and determining supports (i.e., educational planning). The formal assessment will be introduced as a mechanism to determine a child's stage of language acquisition, establish a profile of strengths and areas of need in those areas most impacted by the core challenges of ASD and monitor progress over time.

III. Learner Outcomes:

Participants will be able to:

1. Identify how the SCERTS scope and sequence of goals can be used to guide the development of meaningful, functional and evidence-based objectives in social communication and emotional regulation.

2. Adjust programming related to educational objectives and appropriate strategies for enhancing active engagement

3. Adjust programming related to educational objectives and appropriate strategies for enhancing smooth transitions

4. Adjust programming related to educational objectives and appropriate strategies for enhancing conventional emotional expression

V. Time Ordered Agenda:

Day 1

9:30 – 11:00 a.m.	The neuroscience of social competence in children with autism and social emotional learning differences
11:00 – 11:20 a.m.	Break
11:20 – 12:30 p.m.	Identifying the core domains and practice principles of the SCERTS framework
12:30 – 1:15 p.m.	Lunch
1:15 – 2:40 p.m.	Identifying developmental stages and essential social communication objectives within the SCERTS curriculum
2:40 – 3:00 p.m.	Break
3:00 – 4:15 p.m.	Identifying developmental stages and essential emotional regulation objectives within the SCERTS curriculum

Day 2

9:30 – 11:00 a.m.	Using video case reviews to identify objectives and appropriate strategies for enhancing active engagement – *small group break-out sessions*
11:00 – 11:20 a.m..	Break
11:20 – 12:30 p.m.	Using the SCERTS Practice Principles to identify objectives and appropriate strategies for enhancing smooth transitions - *small group break-out sessions*
12:30 – 1:15 p.m..	Lunch
1:15 – 2:40 p.m..	Identifying educational objectives and appropriate strategies for enhancing conventional emotional expression - *small group break-out session*
2:40 – 3:00 p.m.	Break
3:00 – 4:15 p.m	Using the SCERTS Assessment Process to as a meaningful measure of outcome and program planning

VI. Speaker Profile:

Emily Rubin, MS, CCC-SLP is the Director of the Educational Outreach Program at the Marcus Autism Center, affiliated with Emory University. She is a speech-language pathologist specializing in autism, Asperger's Syndrome, and related social learning disabilities. As a former adjunct faculty member and lecturer at Yale University, she has served as a member of their Autism and Developmental Disabilities Clinic. She recently participated as a member of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association's Ad Hoc Committee on Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), a committee charged with developing guidelines related to the role of speech-language pathologists in the diagnosis, assessment, and treatment of ASD. She is a co-author of the SCERTS Assessment Process and she provides professional development internationally to educational programs developing programs for social and emotional learning and serving children and adolescents with autism and related developmental disorders.

Introduction to the SCERTS Model

Addressing Social Emotional Competence in ASD

PRESENTER:
EMILY RUBIN
Co-Author, the SCERTS Model
Educational Outreach Specialist

Social Emotional Competence;
(Marans, Rubin & Laurent, 2005)

"Social [emotional] competence…plays a major role in our success or inability to form those relationships that allow us to function happily and effectively in the communities within which we live."

The neurology of social competence

- Contemporary research in the neurodevelopment of social competence has fostered a greater understanding of those with and without vulnerabilities in these areas.

The neurology of social competence

- When neurotypical infants look at peoples faces, regions in the limbic system "light up" with endorphins and reward that child.

The neurology of social competence

- By 6 months of age, a child begins to follow gaze and can recognize when they have lost a caregiver's attention.

The neurology of social competence

- By 10 months of age, a child begins to shift gaze from a caregiver to objects of reference to predict and anticipate the actions of others.

The neurology of social competence

- By 12 months of age, a child will initiate shared attention on desired items or items that are of interest to the child.

The neurology of social competence

These capacities ensure that a neurotypical child:

- is drawn toward social vs. non-social stimuli,
- derives pleasure from this engagement,
- notices attention shifts of others,
- initiates bids for engagement, actions, and objects of interest,
- imitates actions of others,
- develops language about people and intentions to share these messages, and
- engages in interactions using expected social behaviors (e.g., adhering to social norms) in order to maintain relationships over time.

Unique neurological differences in social competence

Current neuroscience illustrates that:

- Children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) show limited neural sensitivity to social stimuli and tend not to look toward people's faces.
- Other developmental differences and the caregiving environment also compromise social and emotional neurodevelopment.

Unique neurological differences in social competence

LETTER

doi:10.1038/nature12715

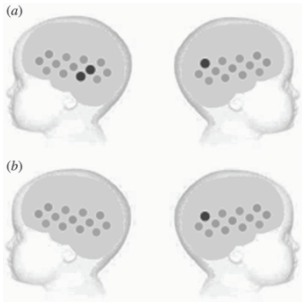
Attention to eyes is present but in decline in 2–6-month-old infants later diagnosed with autism

Warren Jones[1,2,3] & Ami Klin[1,2,3]

Deficits in eye contact have been a hallmark of autism[1,2] since the condition's initial description[3]. They are cited widely as a diagnostic feature[4] and figure prominently in clinical instruments[5], however, the early onset of these deficits has not been known. Here we show in a prospective longitudinal study that infants later diagnosed with autism spectrum disorders (ASDs) exhibit mean decline in eye fixation from 2 to 6 months of age, a pattern not observed in infants who

Data were collected at 10 time points: at months 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9, 12, 15, 18 and 24. We studied 110 infants, enrolled as risk-based cohorts: $n = 59$ at high-risk for ASD (full siblings of a child with ASD[*]) and $n = 51$ at low-risk (without first-, second- or third-degree relatives with ASD). Diagnostic status was ascertained at 36 months. For details on study design, clinical characterization of participants, and experimental procedures, see Methods and Supplementary Information.

Visual social versus non-social stimuli analysis for the (a) low-risk and (b) high-risk infants.



Lloyd-Fox S et al. Proc. R. Soc. B 2013;280:20123026

PROCEEDINGS OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY B

Unique neurological differences in social competence

- Children with these vulnerabilities tend not to look toward others or tend to look at the mouths of the speaker.
- Limited shared positive affect is an early indicator of these differences.

Unique neurological differences in social competence

- Children "at risk" miss gaze shifts between people and objects. They have difficulty predicting actions and initiating bids for engagement.

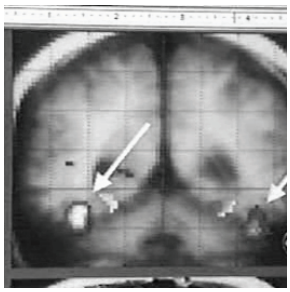
Unique neurological differences in social competence

- Similarly, when neurotypical children hear speech sounds, these are processed as social or intentional stimuli, while children with vulnerabilities may simply hear sounds, making the intentions of individual words more ambiguous.

Unique neurological differences in social competence

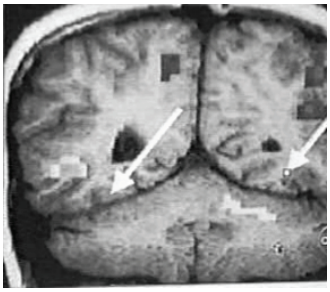
- As children with vulnerabilities in these areas mature and "brain architecture is formed," neuroimaging has shown that children with with specific social and emotional disorders (i.e., autism) tend to process social stimuli in regions typically used to process images and sounds that are non-biological.
- This makes predictions of actions, intentions, and emotions more inefficient and intellectualized.

The neurology of social competence
Child who is neurotypical



Shultz, et. al. (2000, April). Archives in General Psychiatry, Vol. 57, 331 – 340.

The neurology of social competence
Child with autism



Shultz, et. al. (2000, April). Archives in General Psychiatry, Vol. 57, 331 – 340.

Unique Neurological Differences - *Implications*

Priority #1:

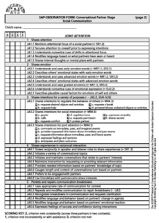
Addressing social emotional competencies *is critical for long-term positive outcomes*

Priority #2:

Creating productive learning environments *with an understanding of the nature of social emotional learning differences*

The primary domains of SCERTS® address these priorities

Social
Communication
Emotional
Regulation
Transactional
Support



The primary domains of SCERTS® address these priorities

- SC - Social Communication; Supporting a child's ability to communicate, comprehend, and collaborate with others,
- ER – Emotional Regulation; Supporting a child's ability to cope, make transitions, and actively engage with others.
- TS – Transactional Support; interpersonal supports and learning supports embedded in the natural environment to foster SC and ER

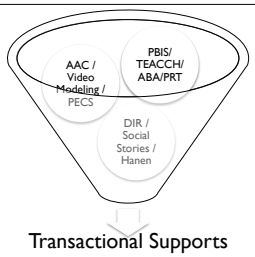
Social Communicative Competence; Potential vulnerabilities

In children with social and emotional learning differences, social communicative competence is affected by challenges in all three of these critical dimensions.

Social Emotional Competence; Vulnerabilities

- SC - Social Communication; children with social and emotional vulnerabilities show limited initiations, difficulty with social forms of language, and limited understanding of social norms and perspectives,
- ER – Emotional Regulation; Difficulty predicting that others are source of engagement or support leads to both under-arousal and over-arousal; this, paired with limited ability to learn how to cope from others leads to unconventional coping strategies.
- TS – Transactional Support; the "invisible" nature of these learning differences makes it difficult for communicative partners to recognize the need to externalize one's thoughts and create accommodations.

SCERTS® is a comprehensive framework



Transactional Supports for SC and ER

SCERTS Practice Principles – Checklist
A starting point for transactional support

SCERTS Practice Principles for Success - Checklist

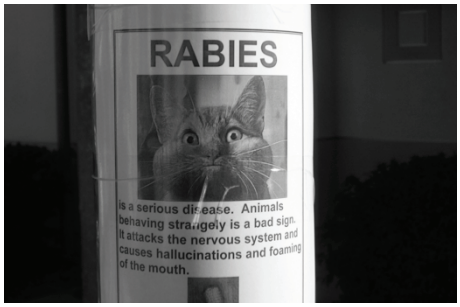
Student Name: **Date:**
Target Activity / Subject: **Follow-up Date:**

Describe what the student did well...		
Visual Structure & Organization Is the student predicting... • **the purpose of the task** *(sensory exploration / cause & effect / tied to special interests or real-life events)* • **the sequence of activities** *(activity baskets, written lists, visual schedules, etc.)* • **the steps within the activity** *(count down strips, visual timers, written help-lists)* • **their role in the activity** *(clear visuals indicate expectations, turn-taking, and rules)*	**What supports are working**	**Next steps**
Social Communication Supports Is the student predicting... • **when to initiate** *(the activity includes opportunities for student participation)* • **what to say** *(visuals such as objects, photos, pictures, written words remind the child how to ask for help, comment, respond to questions, etc.)*	**What supports are working**	**Next steps**
Emotional Regulation Is the student predicting... • **how to regulate their emotions** *(access to sensory supports, visuals choices of coping strategies)* • **that others are responsive and a source of emotional support**	**What supports are working**	**Next steps**

Predict the purpose of activities

Predict the purpose of activities

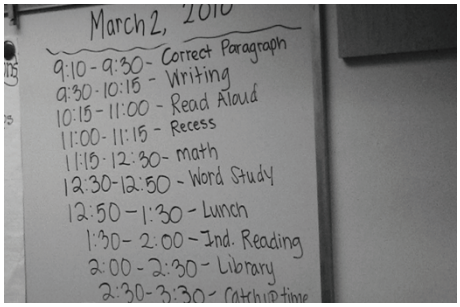
Predict the purpose of activities



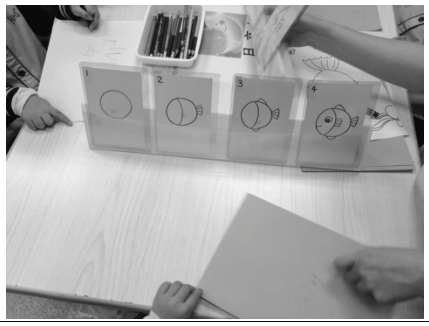
Predict the sequence of activities

Predict the sequence of activities

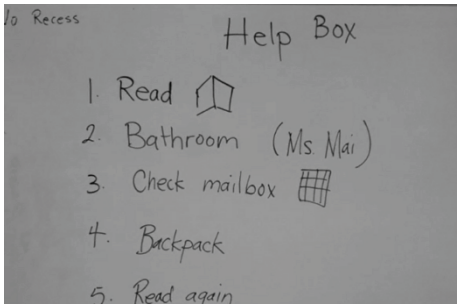
Predict the sequence of activities



Predict the steps within activities

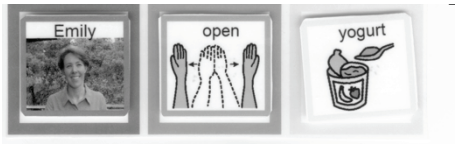


Predict the steps within activities

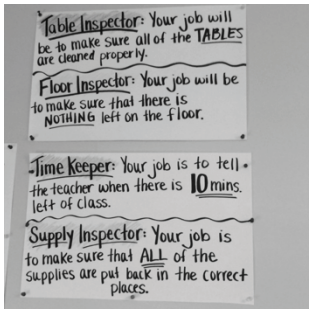


Predict what to say

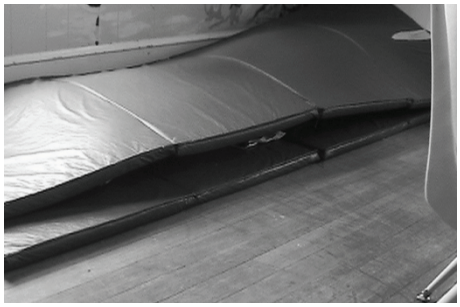
Predict what to say (focusing on subjects & verbs)



Predict what to say



Predict how to regulate emotions



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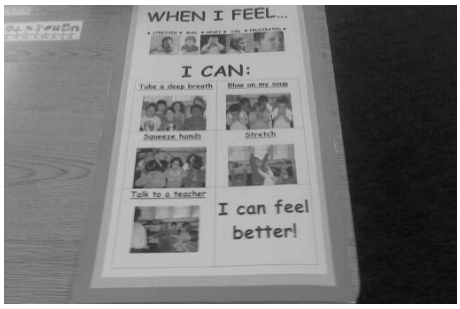
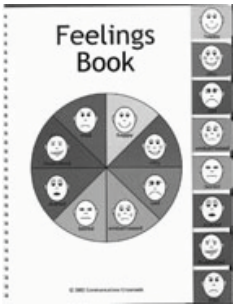


Predict how to regulate emotions



Addressing Social Communication Skills
to Facilitate Social Emotional Competence

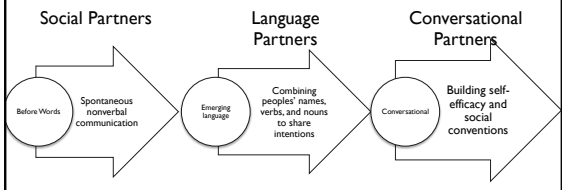
How Neuroscience Informs our Efforts to Support Social Communication

- Predictors of competence social communication can help educators serve children who face adversity in these areas more efficiently.
- Awareness of predictive skills at each stage enables us to be better consumers of evidence-based practices and can provide more *value* in our educational plans.

Wong, et. al, 2013. Evidence-Based Practices for Children, Youth, and Young Adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder. **University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill**

Social Communication

Application of the SCERTS framework to identify priorities



Unique Neuroscience – Before Words "The Social Partner Stage"

What does neuroscience teach us about students who are not yet talking or using symbols to communicate?

- Social stimuli may not be intrinsically rewarding; gestural communication is often delayed.
- In writing goals, our priority is fostering a high rate of spontaneous communication, as nonverbal communication is predictive of the acquisition of language.

Social Partner Stage / Pre-symbolic;
Critical priorities for goal selection

- **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).

Social Partner / Pre-symbolic stages;
sample SCERTS goals (Joint Attention)

Child will communicate for a range of functions across activities, contexts, and partners including:

- Initiating bids for interaction,
- Sharing negative and positive emotions,
- Requesting desired objects,
- Requesting help or other actions,
- Protesting undesired actions or activities,
- Requesting comfort, social games, and greetings,
- Commenting on objects.

Social Partner / Pre-symbolic stages
sample SCERTS goals (Symbol Use)

Child will share intentions across activities, contexts, and partners using:

- imitation of actions or sounds
- proximity to others
- simple motor actions / physical manipulation,
- a give gesture, push away, a touch gesture,
- a show gesture, a point, or a wave gesture,

Social Partner Stage / Pre-symbolic;
Critical priorities for transactional supports

- Promote child initiations enticing and *responding* to the child's communicative signals, fostering a sense of competence.
- Provide objects to remind the child to communicate for assistance (e.g., see through containers)
- Provide objects to remind the child to communicate for engagement (e.g., objects that represent social routines).

Unique Neuroscience – Emerging Language "The Language Partner Stage"

What does neuroscience teach us about students who beginning to talk and/or using symbols to communicate?

- Children at this stage use less gaze shifting and show a preference for nonsocial stimuli, so vocabulary is biased toward nouns.
- In writing goals, our priority is fostering people's names and verbs, as these word combinations are predictive of creative language acquisition.

Language Partner Stage / Emerging Language; ***Critical priorities for goal selection***

- **Increasing range of *spontaneous* communication involving others** (e.g., requesting social 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.")**

Language Partner / Emerging language stages; ***sample SCERTS goals (Joint Attention)***

Child will communicate for a range of functions across activities, contexts, and partners including:

- Securing attention prior to expressing intentions using others' names
- Comments on actions or events
- Sharing emotion and interests

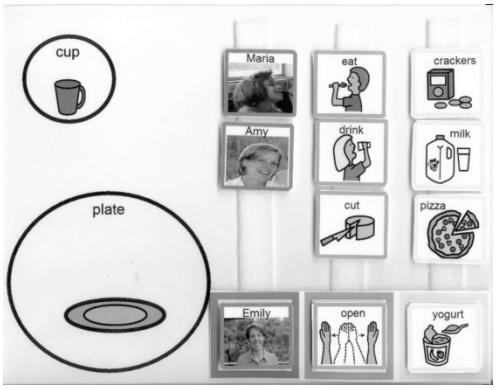
Language Partner / Emerging language stages;
sample SCERTS goals (Symbol Use)

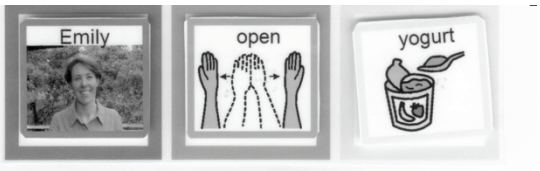
Child will share intentions across activities, contexts, and partners using:

- words, pictures, or signs to represent people, action words, modifiers, and a range of object labels.
- Combining words, pictures, or signs to form creative word combinations such as subject + verb and subject + verb + noun sentences.

Language Partner Stage / Emerging Language;
Critical priorities for transactional supports

- Provide frequent opportunities for child initiations for a range of social functions (e.g., requesting actions from others, requesting comfort, and sharing emotion).
- Provide visual reminders of social language forms (e.g., people's names and actions).





Unique Neuroscience – Conversational
The "Conversational Partner" Stage

What does neuroscience teach us about students who have conversational language?

- Children at this stage have developed social motivation, but have difficulty predicting intentions and social expectations.
- In writing goals, our priority is to build a sense of self-efficacy and social norms, as these skills are predictive of both emotional health and social competence.

Conversational Partner Stage;
Critical priorities for goal selection

- **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).

Conversational Partner
sample SCERTS goals (Joint Attention)

- Showing reciprocity in speaker and listener roles to share experiences,
- Initiating a variety of topics, related to partner's interests,
- Providing needed information based upon partner's perspective,
- Gauge length of turn and content based upon partner's perspective.

Conversational Partner
sample SCERTS goals (Symbol Use)

- Creative simple sentences including subjects, verbs, modifiers (e.g., color, preposition, descriptors), and noun phrases,
- Sentences with increasingly sophisticated grammar (e.g., past, present, future tense, articles, pronouns),
- Sentences with increasingly sophisticated syntax (e.g., subordinate clauses) to clarify information for the listener,
- Using appropriate vocal volume, gestures and proxity for the social context.

The critical role of perspective
James' Story

From a traditional perspective

- James' inappropriate outbursts in class was a characteristic of his autism.
- James' "rude" behavior should have been eliminated or "extinguished"

From a contemporary perspective

- James' conversational bids were an attempt to cope with his emotions.
- James' was taught how to gain support and encouragement appropriately.
- Visuals were included to help him predict when to initiate and when to wait.
- When James' self-esteem improved, challenges decreased.

Conversational Partner Stage;
Critical priorities for transactional supports

- Provide frequent opportunities for successful interactions with peers and positive emotional memories at school and in social contexts.
- Provide visual reminders for what to say, how to engage, and expectations of social and academic activities.

Unique Neuroscience: The Impact on Emotional Regulation

Emotional Regulation;
Critical Capacities in Typical Development
(Prizant et al., 2002)

Self Regulation
The ability to independently attain an optimal level of arousal.

Mutual Regulation
The ability to solicit and accept assistance from others in regulating one's arousal.

Emotional Regulation in ASD
(Prizant et al., 2006)

Self Regulation

In ASD, self-soothing behaviors are often immature or idiosyncratic due to limited ability to learn from others.

Mutual Regulation

In ASD, the ability to accept assistance from others is limited due to difficulty predicting other's intent.

The ability to solicit others' assistance may also be misperceived as being off-putting or defiant and may be ignored.

Emotional Regulation

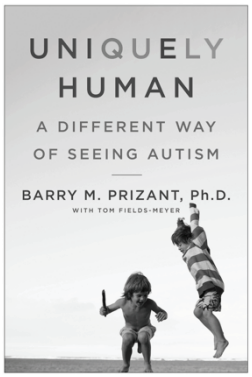
Application of the SCERTS framework to identify priorities

Self-Regulation Goals

1. Demonstrate availability for learning and interacting
2. Use strategies appropriate to developmental level to regulate level of arousal during familiar activities (behavioral, language and metacognitive)
3. Regulate emotion during new and changing situations
4. Recover from extreme dysregulation by self

Mutual Regulation Goals

1. Expresses range of emotions
2. Responds to assistance offered by others
3. Responds to feedback and guidance regarding behavior
4. Requests others' assistance to regulate emotional state
5. Recovers from extreme dysregulation with support from partners



"When you change the way you look at things, the things you look at change".

Wayne Dyer

Recommended Websites

Websites: www.marcus.org/research
www.scerts.com
www.commxroads.com
www.amy-laurent.com
www.autismneighborhood.org

Contact

Contact the presenter: Emily@CommXRoads.com

The SCERTS Model – Implementation & Assessment

Using the SCERTS framework to design programming and to monitor progress in children with Autism Spectrum Disorder

Evidence-based instructional elements: Focused vs. comprehensive frameworks

We know that…

- There are more than two dozen **focused** instructional strategies designed specifically for individuals with autism that are evidence-based (e.g., visual supports, social narratives, functional communication training, technology assistive intervention, etc.).
- Each strategy has been shown to impact a number of outcome areas (e.g., social, communication, behavior, play, cognition).
- These are undoubtedly essential tools for success in our educational programs.

Wong, et. al, 2013. Evidence-Based Practices for Children, Youth, and Young Adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder. **University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill**

Focused vs. comprehensive evidence-based instructional elements

However, we also know that:

- No evidence-based strategy is effective for *all* outcomes that are crucial for the neurodevelopment of social and emotional engagement.
- We need a comprehensive framework that ensures we are targeting the most critical developmental targets using instructional strategies that are relevant for *all* of our learners.

Progress Monitoring & Meaningful Outcomes
Social Communication & Emotional Regulation

Why SCERTS?

- Addresses the neurodevelopmental differences of students with social and emotional disabilities
- Based upon current research in educational settings
- Focuses on program planning and intervention and selecting targeted outcomes that are most predictive of positive outcomes

Why Social Emotional Competence?

Falling in love with the social world

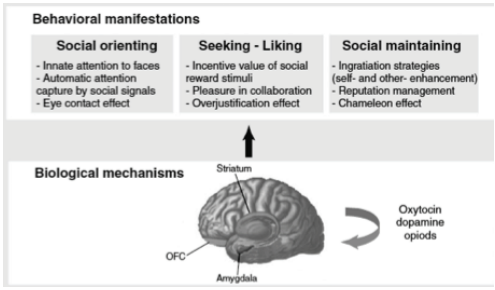
Why Social Emotional Competence?

Seeking out social connections with words

Why Social Emotional Competence?

Succeeding in a range of social settings.

Why Social Emotional Competence?



Chevallier, et. al. (2012). *The social motivation theory of autism.* Trends in Cognitive Sciences., Vol. 16, No. 4

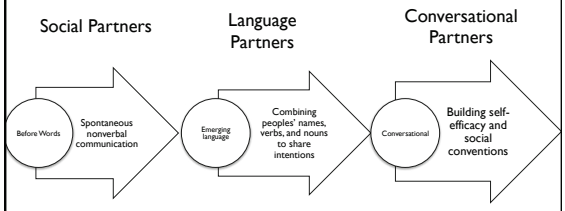
How Neuroscience Informs Social Emotional Development

Why Social Communication?

Children with social emotional learning differences may show limited initiations, limited use of language for people and verbs, and limited understanding of social norms and perspectives.

Social Communication

Application of the SCERTS framework to identify priorities



How Neuroscience Informs Social Emotional Development

Why Emotional Regulation?

Difficulty predicting that others are source of engagement or support leads to both under-arousal and over-arousal; this, paired with limited ability to learn how to cope from others leads to unconventional coping strategies.

Emotional Regulation

Application of the SCERTS framework to select critical goals

How Neuroscience Informs Social Emotional Development

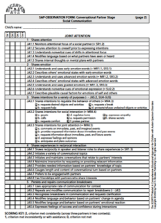
Why Transactional Support?

The "invisible" nature of social emotional learning differences makes it difficult for communicative partners to recognize the need to externalize one's thoughts and provide accommodations.

We need to create social interactions that are both "desirable" and "predictable".

The primary domains of SCERTS® address priorities in progress monitoring and meaningful outcomes

Social
Communication
Emotional
Regulation
Transactional
Support



(Prizant, Wetherby, Rubin & Laurent)

The SCERTS® Assessment Process (SAP)

The SCERTS® Assessment Process (SAP) is a curriculum-based assessment designed to:

- pinpoint educational goals to support a child's social and communicative competence
- identify essential transactional supports (social and environmental antecedents) for supporting a child's progress and success
- embed goals within natural routines through activity planning
- provide a mechanism for measuring outcome in meaningful and functional contexts (ongoing data collection).
- Develop family support plans and plans to support service providers.

Essential implementation priorities for students with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD)

- **Priority #1: Social Communicative Competence & Active Engagement (writing goals)**
- **Priority #2: Understanding the nature of ASD (determining supports)**
- **Priority #3: Educational planning in natural routines using effective practices (systematic planning)**
- **Priority #4: Ongoing monitoring of program fidelity and effectiveness (formal assessment)**

SCERTS® in Action

Practical implementation in begins with:

1) Determining a child's developmental stage (*Reference the stage checklist*)
2) Referencing the SCERTS practice principles to ensure that evidence-based strategies are embedded in targeted activities (*Reference the SCERTS Practice Principles for Success Checklist*).
3) Referencing the scope and sequence in the SCERTS assessment to select meaningful and functional objectives (*Reference – Frequently Used Objectives & Transactional Supports*)
4) Creating an educational planning grid to ensure supports are embedded across activities, partners, and contexts (*Reference Sample Planning Grid*).

SCERTS® in Action
Practice Time

1. Stage Checklist
2. SCERTS Practice Principles Checklist
3. Frequently Used Objectives
4. Educational Planning Grid

Where is support needed the most?

1. Active Engagement and Functional Communication
2. Transitions
3. Emotional Expression & Coping Strategies

Active Engagement

From early to advanced stages of development

Why is active engagement difficult with individuals with ASD?

- They have a hard time predicting the clear beginning and end of the task.
- They may not be motivated, because the result of the task may not be rewarding.
- The "what's in it for me factor" is compromised.
- Predicting that others are a source of assistance and social engagement is compromised, reducing functional communication attempts.

What we can do to foster active engagement?

- Infuse motivating and meaningful topics in activities
  - We have to ensure that there is a reason to engage in the task & that the task has a purpose that makes sense. We need to pass the "why" am I doing this and "when" will I use this test.
- Provide supports to define steps within a task
- Modifies the sensory properties of the environment
- Provide support to foster child's success with the task and visuals for functional communication

Where is support needed the most?

1. Active Engagement and Functional Communication
2. Transitions
3. Emotional Expression & Coping Strategies

Transitions

From early to advanced stages of development

Why are transitions difficult for individuals with ASD?

- They have hard time predicting what we are going to do.
- They may not know what to expect.
- They might not be using self-talk to transition.
- Verbal language and gestures are often not helpful.
- Physical guidance can pose an additional threat.

What we can do during transitions

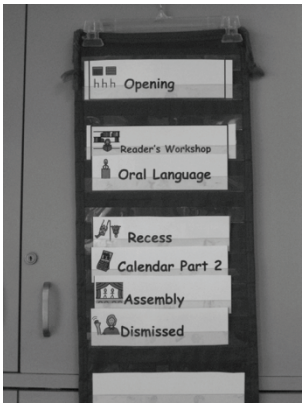
(Prizant et al., 2006)

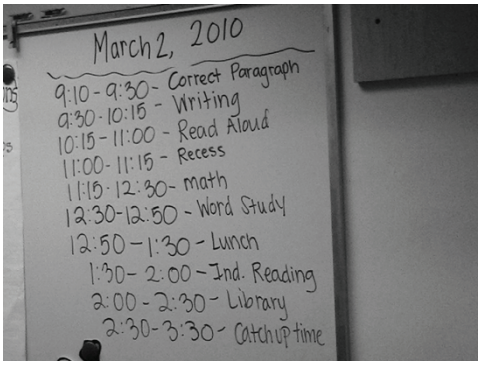
- Provide visual support to enhance smooth transitions.
- Provide time for child to solve problems and complete activities at own pace by limiting physical direction.
- Infuse motivating and meaningful topics in upcoming activities to increase engagement and motivation.
- Use visuals to define steps within upcoming tasks to enhance language for self-regulation (e.g., first…then).

Transition Objects or Activity Baskets

Change Diaper **Wash** **Breakfast** **Music**


Leo's Day
Sunday


Opening
Reader's Workshop
Oral Language
Recess
Calendar Part 2
Assembly
Dismissed



Daily Schedule at Desk
Student Check-Off

Emotional Expression & Coping

From early to advanced stages of development

Why is emotional expression difficult with individuals with ASD?

- They may not have had as many positive emotional experiences with others as neurotypical individuals
- They often don't perceive others as source of help, social engagement, or emotional assistance
- They often feel vulnerable and stressed
- They may become disinterested in people and show decreased rates of initiations, particularly for social functions

What we can do to foster more conventional emotional expression

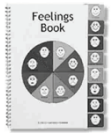
(Prizant et al., 2006)

- Inhibit our initial "wired" reaction to a student's behavior
- Attune to the student's emotion
- Model emotional expressions appropriate to child's developmental level (from gestures, to early word combinations, to sentences)
- Model appropriate behavior when child uses inappropriate behavior
- Use visuals supports to remind individual how to express emotion and to provide choices of coping strategies, & to enhance regulation

Visual Supports – Emotional Expression

Emotion key ring

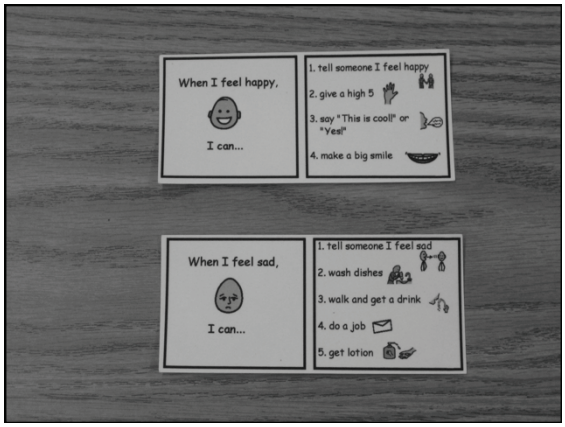
Feelings Book

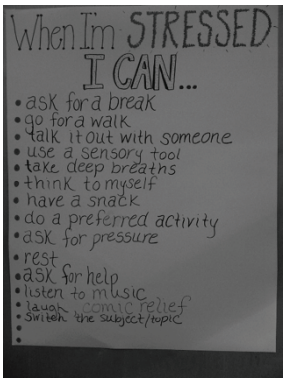


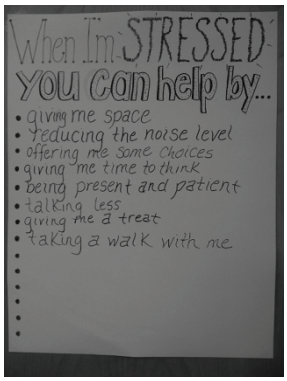
Emotion Ring

To download at no cost:

Visit: www.commxroads.com







The SCERTS Model – Assessment

Using the SCERTS framework to monitor progress over time in children with Autism Spectrum Disorder

The SCERTS® Assessment Process (SAP)

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Priority #4: Ongoing monitoring of program fidelity and effectiveness – formal assessment

Please reference Volume 1: Chapter 7 for formal assessment guidelines

Comparing the SCERTS® Assessment Process (SAP) to traditional educational evaluations

Traditional Evaluation

- *Evaluation* tools are conducted in a brief period of time using standardized, norm-referenced instruments.
- Norm-referenced instruments utilize measurement that provides a ranking of a child in reference to a group performance.

SCERTS Assessment Process (SAP)

- *Assessment* procedures, like the SAP, rely on multiple strategies and sources of information and are administered over time.
- The SAP is a criterion-referenced or curriculum-based tool, which measures a child's developmental achievements within a domain

Comparing the SCERTS® Assessment Process (SAP) to traditional educational evaluations 3 Primary Distinctions

Assessment in everyday situations with everyday social partners

In contrast to those assessment approaches which are primarily adult directed, placing the child being evaluated in a respondent role, the SAP gathers information as children participate in everyday activities with a variety of partners.

Comparing the SCERTS® Assessment Process (SAP) to traditional educational evaluations 3 Primary Distinctions

Focus on function over form of language

The SAP focuses on the functional use of language and nonverbal communication, socioemotional abilities rather than on specific forms and milestones of language acquisition.

Comparing the SCERTS® Assessment Process (SAP) to traditional educational evaluations 3 Primary Distinctions

Level of family involvement

In the SAP, assessment information is gathered across a variety of social contexts (home, community, school), including contexts with family members. Family members are also involved in providing information and identifying priorities.

Implementing the SCERTS assessment process (SAP)

Please refer to Chapter 7; Volume I for detailed instructions

10 Steps to Implement the SAP

1. Determining the child's communication stage
2. Gather information with the SAP-Report
3. Identify assessment team members and plan the SAP-Observation
4. Complete the SAP-Observation Form
5. Behavior Sampling (if needed)

10 Steps to Implement the SAP

6. Compile Information with the SAP- Summary Form
7. Prioritize Goals and Objectives
8. Recommend further assessment
9. Design a SCERTS Educational Program
10. Ongoing Tracking

10 Steps to Implement the SAP

Refer to SCERTS Assessment Flowcharts

Step 1: Determining the child's communication stage

1. Social Partner Stage (i.e., communication through pre-symbolic means),
2. Language Partner Stage (i.e., communication through early symbolic means, including single words through multi-word combinations),
3. Conversational Partner Stage (i.e., communication through sentence and conversational level discourse).

To determine which forms to use, complete the:
Worksheet for Determining Communication Stage

Step 2: Gather information with the SAP-Report

The SAP-R Form includes a needs assessment to identify:

- the top 3 to 5 needs for the family to identify caregiver priorities and stresses;
- the top strengths and needs for their child;
- where we would likely see the child at his "best" and "worst" so that we can determine the best time and place to obtain a picture of a child's abilities;

Step 2: Gather information with the SAP-Report

The SAP-R Form includes a needs assessment to identify:

- the child's typical social partners;
- the contexts of the child's life (e.g., home, daycare, playground, school, dance class).
- information about factors contributing to developmental capacities in SC, ER, and TS.

Step 3: Identify assessment team members and plan the SAP- Observation

The SAP is designed to be a team assessment designed to gather **representative** information about a child's range of abilities and needs within natural environments.

Step 3: Planning the SAP- Observation (continued)

There are 6 critical variables to consider in planning the observation.

1. **Length of Observation** (SP & LP stages – at least 2 hours, CP stages – at least 3 hours) – across 2 different days.
2. **Group Size** (SP, LP, & CP Stages – at least 2 group sizes with the exception of children not yet in school – 1:1 is sufficient
3. **Partners** (SP, LP, & CP Stages – should be observed with familiar partners; LP & CP – both unfamiliar and familiar; children in school/daycare – adults *and* children partners)

Step 3: Planning the SAP- Observation (continued)

4. **Natural Contexts** (recommended – at least 2 contexts, video tape review may be used)
5. **Activity Variables** (all children should be observed in at least 4 activities with 4 different SAP variables)
6. **Transitions** (all children should be observed across 3 transitions)

Sample SAP-MAP
(refer to sample case forms)

Step 4: Complete the SAP-Observation Form (refer to page sample case forms)

1. Notes should be taken related to specific objectives in SC, ER, TS (SCERTS Observation Questions)
2. At the end of the observation, each behavior should be rated using a 0, 1, 2 point scoring system (based on the criterion for each communication stage).
3. If not enough information is obtained, information can be pulled from the SAP-R (caregiver questionnaire).

Step 4: Complete the SAP-Observation Form (refer to sample case forms)

Please refer to SCERTS Manuals Chapter 8;Volume I for scoring criteria for each objective

Step 5: Behavior Sampling (if needed)

Behavior Sampling

1. Can be used in the event that a behavior is not observed and information on the SAP R is not sufficient to score determine a score
2. Can consist of "sabotaging" a naturally occurring routines
3. Can consist activity designed specifically to elicit a particular skill or ability.

Step 6: Compile Information with the SAP- Summary Form

Results of the SAP should be summarized on the **SAP Summary (SAP-S)** Form to compile information. The SAP-S provides a format to summarize two key sources of information:

- the child's strengths and needs identified on the SAP-O, and
- family perception of the SAP-O results and priorities for goal setting.

Step 7: Prioritize Goals and Objectives

The assessment team members should work together to prioritize educational objectives that are:

(1) the **most functional,**
(2) directly **address family priorities**, and
(3) match the **developmental areas of need** revealed on the SAP-S Profile

Select approx. 4 for the child from the SC and ER component and approx. 4 objectives for the team from the TS component.

See Volume II, Chapter 4
for Linking Transactional Support Goals
to SC and ER objectives

For case examples,
See Vol. II, Ch. 5 – Social Partner Stage
See Vol. II, Ch. 6 – Language Partner Stage
See Vol. II, Ch. 7 – Conversational Partner Stage

Step 8: Recommend further assessment (refer to sample case forms)

This section is designed to enter information from outside assessments that have been completed and/ or to make recommendations for further assessments that need to be completed.

Step 9: Design a SCERTS Educational Program
See sample case forms

1. **SAP Activity Planning Forms** should be used for each child to plan educational programming
2. The **SCERTS Family Support Plan** should be completed
3. The **SCERTS Support Plan for Professionals and Service Providers** should be completed

Step 10: Ongoing Tracking

1. The child's performance can be monitored daily using a **SAP Daily Tracking Log**
2. Daily Tracking Logs can be used to complete the **SAP Weekly Tracking Log**. The 0, 1, 2 scoring as defined above and used on the SAP-O for each language stage should also be used on the Weekly Tracking Log.

Implementing SCERTS;

Predicting Success
and
Monitoring Program Quality

Possible predictors of success

- Team collaboration (e.g., among educational staff, home/school communication, and members of the community),
- Administrative support and commitment to program quality improvement (e.g., planning time, team meeting time, ongoing professional development, resources for the development of learning supports)

Possible predictors of success

- Key personnel / assigned "point person" with responsibility to support service providers in program implementation,
- Child- and family-centered attitudes and beliefs about ASD and how children with ASD learn (e.g., experience and familiarity with a range of approaches for supporting children with ASD and families),

Possible predictors of success

- Mechanisms for family support and family investment in the program,
- Commitment to assessing and educating children in natural routines and activities (e.g., home, school, and community settings),
- Ongoing participation in SCERTS® educational activities

Implementing the SCERTS Model; Developing a Plan of Action

- Develop new learning supports to foster SC and ER
- Develop SCERTS educational planning grids for multiple children by selecting SC & ER objectives and linking to TS objectives
- Administer a SCERTS assessment on a pilot case in your program
- Work toward systems change by advocating for program planning time, team collaboration, family support plans, and ongoing education.

Recommended Websites

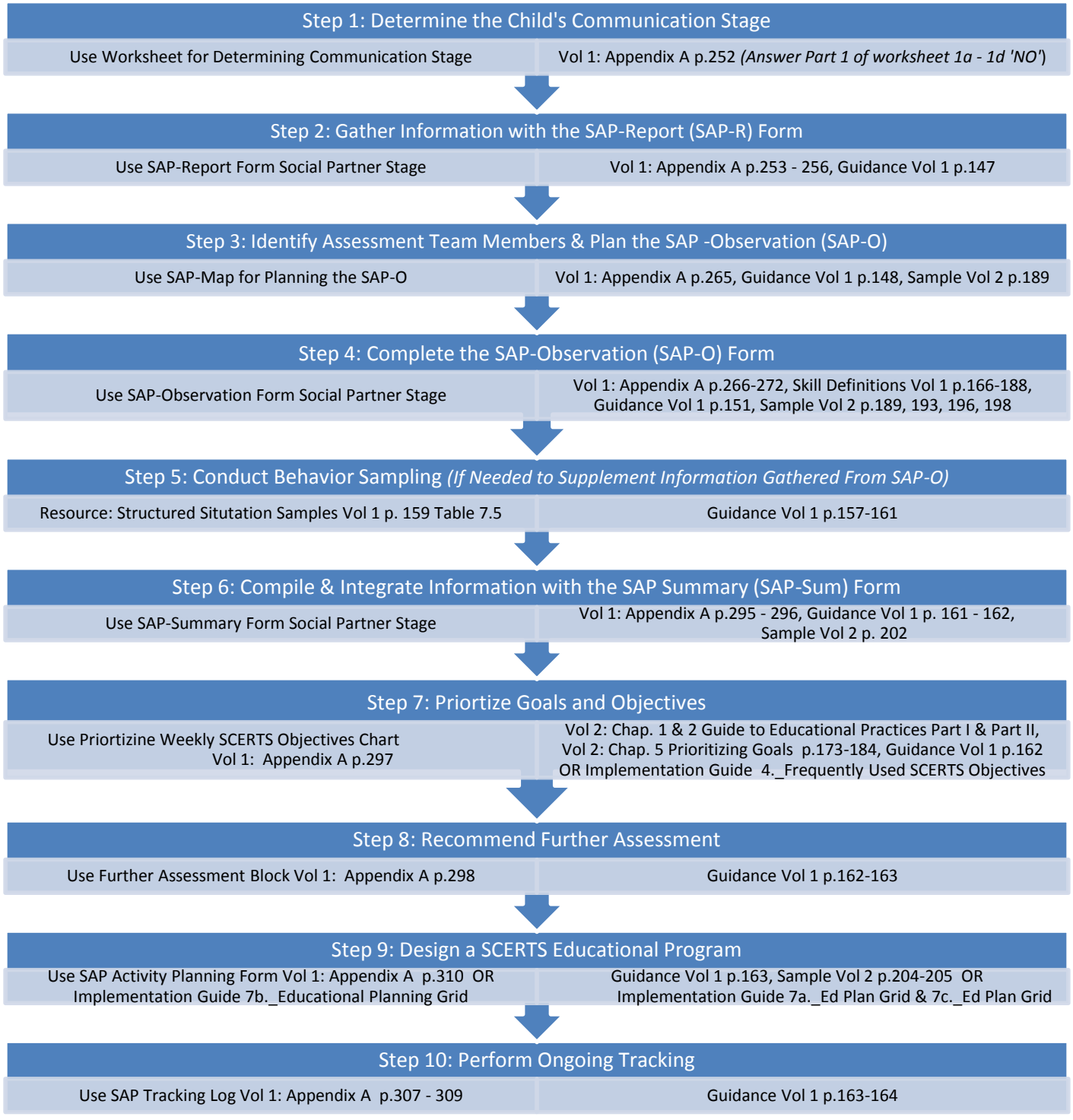
Websites: www.scerts.com
www.commxroads.com
www.amy-laurent.com
www.autismneighborhood.org

Contact the presenter:

Emily@commxroads.com

The SCERTS Assessment Process (SAP)

Social Partner Stage: From Assessment to Program Implementation



Volume II Chapter 5 – Enhancing Social Communication, Emotional Regulation, and Transactional Support at the Social Partner Stage p. 171

Spotlights (Case Studies)
Novice Social Partner: Jason p.185 – 208
Advanced Social Partner: Sarah p.208 – 225

Page Numbers are not published in the Appendix and should be added manually

The SCERTS Assessment Process (SAP)

Language Partner Stage: From Assessment to Program Implementation

Step 1: Determine the Child's Communication Stage	
Use Worksheet for Determining Communication Stage	Vol 1: Appendix A p.252 *(Answer Part 1 of worksheet 1a - 1d 'YES' & Answer Part 2 of worksheet 2a - 2d 'NO')*
Step 2: Gather Information with the SAP-Report (SAP-R) Form	
Use SAP-Report Form Language Partner Stage	Vol 1: Appendix A p.257 - 260, Guidance Vol 1 p.147
Step 3: Identify Assessment Team Members & Plan the SAP -Observation (SAP-O)	
Use SAP-Map for Planning the SAP-O	Vol 1: Appendix A p.265, Guidance Vol 1 p.148, Sample Vol 2 p.250
Step 4: Complete the SAP-Observation (SAP-O) Form	
Use SAP-Observation Form Social Partner Stage	Vol 1: Appendix A p.274-280, Skill Definitions Vol 1 p.188-216, Guidance Vol 1 p.151, Sample Vol 2 p.250, 254, 258, 261
Step 5: Conduct Behavior Sampling *(If Needed to Supplement Information Gathered From SAP-O)*	
Resource: Structured Situtation Samples Vol 1 p. 159 Table 7.5	Guidance Vol 1 p.157-161
Step 6: Compile & Integrate Information with the SAP Summary (SAP-Sum) Form	
Use SAP-Summary Form Language Partner Stage	Vol 1: Appendix A p.299 - 300, Guidance Vol 1 p. 161 - 162, Sample Vol 2 p.264
Step 7: Priortize Goals and Objectives	
Use Priortizine Weekly SCERTS Objectives Chart Vol 1: Appendix A p.301	Vol 2: Chap. 1 & 2 Guide to Educational Practices Part I & Part II, Vol 2: Chap. 6 Prioritizing Goals p.229-244, Guidance Vol 1 p.162 OR Implementation Guide 4._Frequently Used SCERTS Objectives
Step 8: Recommend Further Assessment	
Use Further Assessment Block Vol 1: Appendix A p.302	Guidance Vol 1 p.162-163
Step 9: Design a SCERTS Educational Program	
Use SAP Activity Planning Form Vol 1: Appendix A p.310 OR Implementation Guide 7b._Educational Planning Grid	Guidance Vol 1 p.163, Sample Vol 2 p.266-267 OR Implementation Guide 7a._Ed Plan Grid & 7c._Ed Plan Grid
Step 10: Perform Ongoing Tracking	
Use SAP Tracking Log Vol 1: Appendix A p.307 - 309	Guidance Vol 1 p.163-164

Volume II Chapter 6 – Enhancing Social Communication, Emotional Regulation, and Transactional Support at the Language Partner Stage p. 227

Spotlights (Case Studies)
Novice Language Partner: Gregory p.244 – 270
Advanced Language Partner: Etash p.270 – 290

*Page Numbers are not published in the Appendix and should be added manually

The SCERTS Assessment Process (SAP)

Conversational Partner Stage: From Assessment to Program Implementation

Step 1: Determine the Child's Communication Stage

Use Worksheet for Determining Communication Stage	Vol 1: Appendix A p.252 *(Answer Part 1 of worksheet 1a - 1d 'YES' & Answer Part 2 of worksheet 2a - 2d 'YES')*

Step 2: Gather Information with the SAP-Report (SAP-R) Form

Use SAP-Report Form Conversational Partner Stage	Vol 1: Appendix A p.261 - 264, Guidance Vol 1 p.147

Step 3: Identify Assessment Team Members & Plan the SAP -Observation (SAP-O)

Use SAP-Map for Planning the SAP-O	Vol 1: Appendix A p.265, Guidance Vol 1 p.148, Sample Vol 2 p.340

Step 4: Complete the SAP-Observation (SAP-O) Form

Use SAP-Observation Form Social Partner Stage	Vol 1: Appendix A p.284-290, Skill Definitions Vol 1 p.216-244, Guidance Vol 1 p.151, Sample Vol 2 p.340, 346, 350, 354

Step 5: Conduct Behavior Sampling *(If Needed to Supplement Information Gathered From SAP-O)*

Resource: Structured Situtation Samples Vol 1 p. 160 Table 7.5	Guidance Vol 1 p.157-161

Step 6: Compile & Integrate Information with the SAP Summary (SAP-Sum) Form

Use SAP-Summary Form Conversational Partner Stage	Vol 1: Appendix A p.303-304, Guidance Vol 1 p. 161 - 162, Sample Vol 2 p.356

Step 7: Priortize Goals and Objectives

Use Priortizine Weekly SCERTS Objectives Chart Vol 1:Appendix A p.305	Vol 2: Chap. 1 & 2 Guide to Educational Practices Part I & Part II, Vol 2: Chap. 7 Prioritizing Goals p.294-311, Guidance Vol 1 p.162 OR Implementation Guide 4._Frequently Used SCERTS Objectives

Step 8: Recommend Further Assessment

Use Further Assessment Block Vol 1: Appendix A p.306	Guidance Vol 1 p.162-163

Step 9: Design a SCERTS Educational Program

Use SAP Activity Planning Form Vol 1: Appendix A p.310 OR Implementation Guide 7b._Educational Planning Grid	Guidance Vol 1 p.163, Sample Vol 2 p.359-360 OR Implementation Guide 7a._Ed Plan Grid & 7c._Ed Plan Grid

Step 10: Perform Ongoing Tracking

Use SAP Tracking Log Vol 1: Appendix A p.307 - 309	Guidance Vol 1 p.163-164

Volume II Chapter 7 – Enhancing Social Communication, Emotional Regulation, and Transactional Support at the Conversational Partner Stage p. 291

Spotlights (Case Studies)
Novice Conversational Partner: Kaneesha p.311 – 333
Advanced Conversational Partner: Alan p.333 – 362

Page Numbers are not published in the Appendix and should be added manually

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 used 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.

The SCERTS™ Model: A Comprehensive Educational Approach for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders
by Barry M. Prizant, Amy M. Wetherby, Emily Rubin, Amy C. Laurent, & Patrick J. Rydell

SAP-REPORT FORM: Language Partner Stage

Child's name: _____ Age: _____ Date filled out: _____

Filled out by: _____ Relationship to child: _____

This questionnaire is designed to be completed by a parent, teacher, or other person who interacts with this child on a daily or regular basis. Please answer the following questions about this child's ***social communication*** (understanding and use of nonverbal and verbal communication in social interaction), ***emotional regulation*** (capacity to regulate attention, arousal, and emotional state), and ***transactional support*** (ways that partners and learning activities support development). We would like you to complete this when you can observe the child, or immediately after you observe the child, and notice the behaviors listed. Please provide examples.

SOCIAL COMMUNICATION

1. Describe how the child interacts with others. For example, does the child respond to bids for interaction? Initiate interaction? Take a few turns? Take many turns that follow a shared attentional focus?

2. Describe the child's use of eye gaze during interactions. For example, does the child look at people rarely or often? When playing with toys, does the child look up to see if you are watching and then look back at the object?

3. Which of the following gestures does the child use regularly to communicate? Check all that apply.

   ___ Show objects ___ Wave ___ Point at a distance ___ Clap

   ___ Head shake (for rejecting or refusing) ___ Head nod (for accepting or indicating yes)

4. Which of the following types of words (spoken, signed, pictures, written words, or other symbolic system) does the child use regularly to communicate? Check all that apply and give examples.

   ___ Names of things (e.g., toys, food items, body parts) _____

   ___ Names of people or pets _____

   ___ Way to indicate "more" or "another" _____

   ___ Way to indicate "no" or "gone" _____

   ___ Greeting words (e.g., "hi," "bye," "see you later") _____

   ___ Action words (e.g., "eat," "run," "go") _____

   ___ Modifiers or words that describe things (e.g., "hot," "big," "stuck") _____

   ___ Spontaneous word combinations (e.g., "go outside," "cookie gone") _____

5. Which of the following reasons does the child communicate for? Check all that apply and give examples.

   ___ To request a desired object or help _____

   ___ To protest something he or she does not like _____

   ___ To greet _____

   ___ To request permission _____

   ___ To draw your attention to something that he or she wants you to notice _____

   ___ To request information about things of interest _____

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6. How often does the child initiate communication when interacting . . .

	seldom or not at all	*sometimes*	*often*
. . . with a familiar person?	_____	_____	_____
. . . with an unfamiliar person?	_____	_____	_____
. . . in small groups?	_____	_____	_____

7. What happens if you can't figure out what the child is asking for? What does the child do?

8. What are the child's favorite toys? How does he or she play with them?

9. How does the child respond if a familiar adult joins in play? If a familiar peer or sibling joins?

10. How does the child respond to actions and sounds modeled by others?

	seldom or not at all	*sometimes*	*often*
Does the child imitate familiar actions or sounds?	_____	_____	_____
Does the child imitate new actions or sounds?	_____	_____	_____
Does the child imitate behaviors in new situations?	_____	_____	_____

11. Which of the following instructions or cues does the child understand? Check all that apply.

___ Gestures other than pointing ___ Pointing ___ Photographs or pictures ___ Written words

___ Facial expressions ___ Intonation ___ Child's name

___ Words or phrases in familiar contexts; give examples: _____

___ Names of people and objects, without contextual cues; give examples: _____

___ Action word or modifiers, without contextual cues; give examples: _____

___ Phrases or sentences without contextual cues; give examples: _____

EMOTIONAL REGULATION

1. How does the child respond to people and things in his or her environment? For example, does the child show interest in a variety of situations, show intense interest in a few things, express different emotions, keep to him- or herself, respond to bids for interaction, and/or seek interaction?

2. What activities or situations are the most fun or interesting to the child?

3. What activities or situations create the most distress or are boring to the child?

4. Does the child use strategies to stay focused, interested, calm, or engaged during familiar activities (e.g., squeezing hands; rubbing a blanket; rocking; saying, "Finish work, then go outside")? If so, please describe.

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5. Does the child use strategies to stay focused, interested, calm, or engaged during new and changing situations or situations that are otherwise challenging (e.g., singing a familiar song when changing activities; saying, "Don't worry," when scared)? If so, please describe.

6. Does the child express positive and negative emotions? If so, how?

Positive emotions	*Negative emotions*
Happiness _____	Sadness _____
Contentment _____	Anger or frustration _____
Silliness _____	Fear _____

7. Does the child respond to comfort when offered by others? If so, how?

8. Does the child respond to choices offered by others? If so, how?

9. What strategies do you use to help the child stay focused, interested, calm, and engaged?

10. How do you know when the child is overwhelmed or upset? What signs does the child show?

11. How do you know when the child is bored or uninterested? What signals does the child show?

12. When the child is extremely upset or distressed,

    . . . how does the child recover by him- or herself? How long does this usually take?

    . . . how does the child recover with support from partners? How long does this usually take?

TRANSACTIONAL SUPPORT

1. What people does the child interact with or see on a regular basis (i.e., daily or weekly)?

2. What places does the child go to on a regular basis (i.e., daily or weekly)?

3. Which of the following are easy for you to read, follow, and respond to? Rate all that apply using the following key: 0, *can read or respond rarely or not at all;* 1, *can read and respond some of the time;* 2, *can read and respond most of the time.*

___ The child's focus of attention	___ What the child is trying to communicate
___ How the child is feeling	___ The child's preferred pace (fast or slow)
___ When the child needs a break	___ Whether the child is interested
___ Whether the child is frustrated	___ Whether the child is overwhelmed

4. What strategies are the most helpful to encourage the child to initiate communication and take turns in interaction (e.g., offering choices, waiting and looking at the child, taking a turn and then waiting)?

5. How do you usually react if the child uses problem behaviors, such as hitting, screaming, or biting? Is this reaction effective?

6. What strategies are the most helpful to secure the child's attention (e.g., getting down on the child's level, moving closer to or farther from the child, matching the child's emotion, waiting and following the child)?

7. What strategies are the most helpful to keep interactions going with the child (e.g., allowing the child to initiate interactions, allowing the child to take breaks and move about, following the child's interest)?

8. How do you usually communicate to the child to ensure that your message is understood?

9. Do you use visual supports to help the child communicate, understand language, express emotion, and/or flow with the day better? If so, which supports do you use (e.g., defining steps of a task with pictures, transition objects, picture choices, and/or signs)?

10. What features of the physical or social environment help the child stay engaged (e.g., limiting the number of people the child interacts with, limiting the amount of background noise and/or visual clutter, adding more opportunities for movement and rhythm, using specific places consistently for specific activities)?

11. What features of the physical or social environment help the child communicate better (e.g., using motivating toys or activities that the child prefers, placing enticing or desired objects slightly out of reach)?

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

1. List the top strengths or assets you observe in the child.

2. List your major concerns about the child's development.

3. What information would be most useful to you in planning or updating the child's program?

4. Is there anything else about the child that you think is important to share with us?

5. Do you have any questions for us?

6. What is the best time and way to contact you?

SAP Map for Planning the SAP-Observation

Child's name: _____ Date: _____ Page #:_____

Observation #: _____	Observation #: _____
Location	Location
At least two natural contexts (e.g., home, learning center or school, community)	
Date and time	Date and time
Length	Length
Total observation time of at least 2 hours for Social Partner and Language Partner stages and at least 3–4 hours for Conversational Partner stage	
Team members	Team members
Partners and group size	Partners and group size
At least two group sizes (one to one, small group, large group) at all stages if appropriate; familiar and unfamiliar partners for Language and Conversational Partner stages	
Activities Variables	Activities Variables
At least 4 activities that vary along at least four variables	

Key for activity variables:

1a) Structured	1b) Unstructured	2a) Must do	2b) Fun
3a) Adult directed	3b) Child directed	4a) Motor based	4b) Sedentary
5a) Familiar	5b) Unfamiliar	6a) Preferred	6b) Nonpreferred
7a) Easy	7b) Difficult	8a) Language based	8b) Non–language based
9a) Social	9b) Solitary	10a) Busy	10b) Calm

Transitions	Transitions
At least three transitions involving a significant change of activity, setting, location, or partner	

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Questions to guide observations using the SCERTS® curriculum

1) SC – Joint Attention; Why did the child communicate – for which purposes or functions (e.g., to meet needs, to engage in back-n-forth interaction, to share attention, to engage socially, to share experiences, to express emotions)?

2) SC – Symbol Use; Did you observe the child initiating communication or communicating in response to others? If so, how did the child communicate (e.g., imitated actions/words, gestures, gaze, vocal, verbal, symbols)?

3) ER – Mutual Regulation; How did the child respond to assistance offered by partners? Did he/she seek assistance from others?

4) ER – Self-Regulation; What did the child do to attempt to regulate his/her emotions and arousal (e.g., sensory motor behaviors, talking to himself/herself, planning and self-reflecting)?

5) TS – Interpersonal Support; Which interactive style modifications helped the child regulate, engage, and participate? Which style factors appeared to hinder participation?

6) TS – Learning Support; Which aspects of the activity (e.g., a clear and predictable sequence, motivating meaningful materials) and/or which visual supports were most effective for supporting the child's active engagement? Which variables appeared to hinder participation?

SAP-OBSERVATION FORM: Language Partner Stage **(page 2)**
Social Communication

Child's name: _____

Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	JOINT ATTENTION
				1 Engages in reciprocal interaction
				JA1.1 Initiates bids for interaction (= SR1.1)
				JA1.2 Engages in brief reciprocal interaction (= SR1.2)
				JA1.3 Engages in extended reciprocal interaction (= SR1.3)
				2 Shares attention
				JA2.1 Shifts gaze between people and objects
				JA2.2 Follows contact and distal point (= SU2.2)
				JA2.3 Monitors attentional focus of a social partner
				JA2.4 Secures attention to oneself prior to expressing intentions (≈ JA5.5)
				3 Shares emotion
				JA3.1 Shares negative and positive emotion (= MR1.1; ≈ MR3.1, MR3.2)
				JA3.2 Understands and uses symbols to express a range of emotions (≈ MR1.2, SR3.5)
				JA3.3 Attunes to changes in partners' expression of emotion (= SU2.4; = MR2.5)
				JA3.4 Describes the emotional state of another person (↔ SU5.6)
				4 Shares intentions to regulate the behavior of others (↔ JA7.2, JA8.2, SU4–SU5, MR3.7)
				JA4.1 Requests desired food or objects (≈ MR2.6)
				JA4.2 Protests/refuses undesired food or objects (≈ MR3.4)
				JA4.3 Requests help or other actions (≈ MR2.6)
				JA4.4 Protests undesired actions or activities (≈ MR3.4)
				5 Shares intentions for social interaction (↔ JA7.2, JA8.2, SU4–SU5)
				JA5.1 Requests comfort (≈ MR3.1)
				JA5.2 Requests social game
				JA5.3 Takes turns
				JA5.4 Greets
				JA5.5 Calls (≈ JA2.4)
				JA5.6 Shows off
				JA5.7 Requests permission
				6 Shares intentions for joint attention (↔ JA7.2, JA8.2, SU4–SU5)
				JA6.1 Comments on object
				JA6.2 Comments on action or event
				JA6.3 Requests information about things of interest
				7 Persists and repairs communication breakdowns
				JA7.1 Uses appropriate rate of communication for context
				JA7.2 Repeats and modifies communication to repair (↔ JA4–JA6)
				JA7.3 Recognizes breakdowns in communication
				8 Shares experiences in reciprocal interaction
				JA8.1 Coordinates attention, emotion, and intentions to share experiences
				JA8.2 Shows reciprocity in speaker and listener roles to share experiences (↔ JA4–JA6)
				JA8.3 Initiates interaction and shares experiences with a friend

SCORING KEY: 2, criterion met consistently (across three partners in two contexts);
1, criterion met inconsistently or with assistance; **0,** criterion not met

SAP-OBSERVATION FORM: Language Partner Stage **(page 3)**
Social Communication

Child's name: _____

Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	SYMBOL USE
				1 Learns by observation and imitation of familiar and unfamiliar actions and words
				SU1.1 Spontaneously imitates familiar actions or words immediately after a model
				SU1.2 Spontaneously imitates unfamiliar actions or words immediately after a model
				SU1.3 Spontaneously imitates actions or words and adds a different behavior
				SU1.4 Spontaneously imitates a variety of behaviors later in a different context
				2 Understands nonverbal cues in familiar and unfamiliar activities
				SU2.1 Follows situational and gestural cues in familiar and unfamiliar activities (= SR4.2)
				SU2.2 Follows contact and distal point (= JA2.2)
				SU2.3 Follows instructions with visual cues (photographs or pictures)
				SU2.4 Responds to facial expression and intonation cues (≈ JA3.3)
				3 Uses familiar objects conventionally in play
				SU3.1 Uses a variety of objects in constructive play
				SU3.2 Uses a variety of familiar objects conventionally toward self
				SU3.3 Uses a variety of familiar objects conventionally toward other
				SU3.4 Combines a variety of actions with objects in play
				4 Uses gestures and nonverbal means to share intentions (↔ JA4–JA6, MR3.3, MR3.4)
				SU4.1 Uses a variety of conventional and symbolic gestures ☐ a. show ☐ d. clap ☐ f. head nod ☐ b. wave ☐ e. head shake ☐ g. other _____ ☐ c. distal reach/point
				SU4.2 Uses sequence of gestures or nonverbal means in coordination with gaze
				5 Uses words and word combinations to express meanings (↔ JA4–JA6, MR3.3, MR3.4)
				SU5.1 Coordinates sounds/words with gaze and gestures
				SU5.2 Uses at least 5–10 words or echolalic phrases as symbols
				SU5.3 Uses early relational words ☐ a. existence ☐ b. nonexistence/disappearance ☐ c. recurrence ☐ d. rejection
				SU5.4 Uses variety of names for objects, body parts, and agents
				SU5.5 Uses variety of advanced relational words ☐ a. personal-social ☐ b. action ☐ c. modifier ☐ d. *wh-* word
				SU5.6 Uses variety of relational meanings in word combinations (↔ JA3.4) ☐ a. modifier + object ☐ b. negation + object ☐ c. agent + action + object
				6 Understands a variety of words and word combinations without contextual cues
				SU6.1 Responds to own name
				SU6.2 Responds to a variety of familiar words and phrases (= SR1.6)
				SU6.3 Understands a variety of names without contextual cues
				SU6.4 Understands a variety of relational words without contextual cues ☐ a. action ☐ b. modifier ☐ c. *wh-* word
				SU6.5 Understands a variety of relational meanings in word combinations without contextual cues ☐ a. modifier + object ☐ b. negation + object ☐ c. agent + action + object

SCORING KEY: 2, criterion met consistently (across three partners in two contexts);
1, criterion met inconsistently or with assistance; **0,** criterion not met

SAP-OBSERVATION FORM: Language Partner Stage **(page 4)**
Emotional Regulation

Child's name: _____

Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	MUTUAL REGULATION
				1 Expresses range of emotions (↔ SU4–SU5)
				MR1.1 Shares negative and positive emotion (= JA3.1)
				MR1.2 Understands and uses symbols to express a range of emotions (≈ JA3.2; = SR3.5)
				MR1.3 Changes emotional expression in familiar activities based on partners' feedback
				2 Responds to assistance offered by partners
				MR2.1 Soothes when comforted by partners
				MR2.2 Engages when alerted by partners
				MR2.3 Responds to bids for interaction
				MR2.4 Responds to changes in partners' expression of emotion
				MR2.5 Attunes to changes in partners' expression of emotion (= JA3.3)
				MR2.6 Makes choices when offered by partners
				MR2.7 Changes regulatory strategies based on partners' feedback in familiar activities
				3 Requests partners' assistance to regulate state
				MR3.1 Shares negative emotion to seek comfort (≈ JA3.1, JA5.1)
				MR3.2 Shares positive emotion to seek interaction (≈ JA3.1)
				MR3.3 Requests help when frustrated (≈ JA4.3; ↔ SU4–SU5)
				MR3.4 Protests when distressed (≈ JA4.2, JA4.3; ↔ SU4–SU5)
				MR3.5 Uses language strategies to request a break
				MR3.6 Uses language strategies to request regulating activity or input
				MR3.7 Uses language strategies to exert social control (↔ JA4)
				4 Recovers from extreme dysregulation with support from partners
				MR4.1 Responds to partners' efforts to assist with recovery by moving away from activity
				MR4.2 Responds to partners' use of behavioral strategies
				MR4.3 Responds to partners' use of language strategies
				MR4.4 Responds to partners' attempts to reengage in interaction or activity
				MR4.5 Decreases amount of time to recover from extreme dysregulation due to support from partners
				MR4.6 Decreases intensity of dysregulated state due to support from partners

SCORING KEY: 2, criterion met consistently (across three partners in two contexts);
1, criterion met inconsistently or with assistance; **0,** criterion not met

SAP-OBSERVATION FORM: Language Partner Stage (page 5)
Emotional Regulation

Child's name: _____

Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	SELF-REGULATION
				1 Demonstrates availability for learning and interacting
				SR1.1 Initiates bids for interaction (= JA1.1)
				SR1.2 Engages in brief reciprocal interaction (= JA1.2)
				SR1.3 Engages in extended reciprocal interaction (= JA1.3)
				SR1.4 Responds to sensory and social experiences with differentiated emotions
				SR1.5 Demonstrates ability to inhibit actions and behaviors
				SR1.6 Responds to a variety of familiar words and phrases (= SU6.2)
				SR1.7 Persists during tasks with reasonable demands
				SR1.8 Demonstrates emotional expression appropriate to context
				2 Uses behavioral strategies to regulate arousal level during familiar activities
				SR2.1 Uses behavioral strategies to regulate arousal level during solitary and social activities
				SR2.2 Uses behavioral strategies modeled by partners to regulate arousal level
				SR2.3 Uses behavioral strategies to engage productively in an extended activity
				3 Uses language strategies to regulate arousal level during familiar activities
				SR3.1 Uses language strategies to regulate arousal level during solitary activities
				SR3.2 Uses language strategies to regulate arousal level during social interactions
				SR3.3 Uses language strategies modeled by partners to regulate arousal level
				SR3.4 Uses language strategies to engage productively in an extended activity
				SR3.5 Uses symbols to express a range of emotions (≈ JA3.2; = MR1.2)
				4 Regulates emotion during new and changing situations
				SR4.1 Participates in new and changing situations
				SR4.2 Follows situational and gestural cues in unfamiliar activities (= SU2.1)
				SR4.3 Uses behavioral strategies to regulate arousal level in new and changing situations
				SR4.4 Uses language strategies to regulate arousal level in new and changing situations
				SR4.5 Uses behavioral strategies to regulate arousal level during transitions
				SR4.6 Uses language strategies to regulate arousal level during transitions
				5 Recovers from extreme dysregulation by self
				SR5.1 Removes self from overstimulating or undesired activity
				SR5.2 Uses behavioral strategies to recover from extreme dysregulation
				SR5.3 Uses language strategies to recover from extreme dysregulation
				SR5.4 Reengages in interaction or activity after recovery from extreme dysregulation
				SR5.5 Decreases amount of time to recover from extreme dysregulation
				SR5.6 Decreases intensity of dysregulated state

SCORING KEY: 2, criterion met consistently (across three partners in two contexts);
1, criterion met inconsistently or with assistance; **0,** criterion not met

SAP-OBSERVATION FORM: Language Partner Stage **(page 6)**
Transactional Support

Child's name: _____

Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	INTERPERSONAL SUPPORT
				1 Partner is responsive to child
				IS1.1 Follows child's focus of attention
				IS1.2 Attunes to child's emotion and pace
				IS1.3 Responds appropriately to child's signals to foster a sense of communicative competence
				IS1.4 Recognizes and supports child's behavioral and language strategies to regulate arousal level
				IS1.5 Recognizes signs of dysregulation and offers support
				IS1.6 Imitates child
				IS1.7 Offers breaks from interaction or activity as needed
				IS1.8 Facilitates reengagement in interactions and activities following breaks
				2 Partner fosters initiation
				IS2.1 Offers choices nonverbally or verbally
				IS2.2 Waits for and encourages initiations
				IS2.3 Provides a balance of initiated and respondent turns
				IS2.4 Allows child to initiate and terminate activities
				3 Partner respects child's independence
				IS3.1 Allows child to take breaks to move about as needed
				IS3.2 Provides time for child to solve problems or complete activities at own pace
				IS3.3 Interprets problem behavior as communicative and/or regulatory
				IS3.4 Honors protests, rejections, or refusals when appropriate
				4 Partner sets stage for engagement
				IS4.1 Gets down on child's level when communicating
				IS4.2 Secures child's attention before communicating
				IS4.3 Uses appropriate proximity and nonverbal behavior to encourage interaction
				IS4.4 Uses appropriate words and intonation to support optimal arousal level and engagement
				5 Partner provides developmental support
				IS5.1 Encourages imitation
				IS5.2 Encourages interaction with peers
				IS5.3 Attempts to repair breakdowns verbally or nonverbally
				IS5.4 Provides guidance and feedback as needed for success in activities
				IS5.5 Provides guidance on expressing emotions and understanding the cause of emotions
				6 Partner adjusts language input
				IS6.1 Uses nonverbal cues to support understanding
				IS6.2 Adjusts complexity of language input to child's developmental level
				IS6.3 Adjusts quality of language input to child's arousal level
				7 Partner models appropriate behaviors
				IS7.1 Models appropriate nonverbal communication and emotional expressions
				IS7.2 Models a range of communicative functions ☐ a. behavior regulation ☐ b. social interaction ☐ c. joint attention
				IS7.3 Models appropriate constructive and symbolic play
				IS7.4 Models appropriate behavior when child uses inappropriate behavior
				IS7.5 Models "child-perspective" language

SCORING KEY: 2, criterion met consistently (across three partners in two contexts);
1, criterion met inconsistently or with assistance; **0,** criterion not met

SAP-OBSERVATION FORM: Language Partner Stage **(page 7)**
Transactional Support

Child's name: _____

Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	LEARNING SUPPORT
				1 Partner structures activity for active participation
				LS1.1 Defines clear beginning and ending to activity
				LS1.2 Creates turn-taking opportunities and leaves spaces for child to fill in
				LS1.3 Provides predictable sequence to activity
				LS1.4 Offers repeated learning opportunities
				LS1.5 Offers varied learning opportunities
				2 Partner uses augmentative communication support to foster development
				LS2.1 Uses augmentative communication support to enhance child's communication and expressive language
				LS2.2 Uses augmentative communication support to enhance child's understanding of language and behavior
				LS2.3 Uses augmentative communication support to enhance child's expression and understanding of emotion
				LS2.4 Uses augmentative communication support to enhance child's emotional regulation
				3 Partner uses visual and organizational support
				LS3.1 Uses support to define steps within a task
				LS3.2 Uses support to define steps and time for completion of activities
				LS3.3 Uses visual support to enhance smooth transitions between activities
				LS3.4 Uses support to organize segments of time across the day
				LS3.5 Uses visual support to enhance attention in group activities
				LS3.6 Uses visual support to foster active involvement in group activities
				4 Partner modifies goals, activities, and learning environment
				LS4.1 Adjusts social complexity to support organization and interaction
				LS4.2 Adjusts task difficulty for child success
				LS4.3 Modifies sensory properties of learning environment
				LS4.4 Arranges learning environment to enhance attention
				LS4.5 Arranges learning environment to promote child initiation
				LS4.6 Designs and modifies activities to be developmentally appropriate
				LS4.7 Infuses motivating materials and topics in activities
				LS4.8 Provides activities to promote initiation and extended interaction
				LS4.9 Alternates between movement and sedentary activities as needed
				LS4.10 "Ups the ante" or increases expectations appropriately

SCORING KEY: 2, criterion met consistently (across three partners in two contexts);
1, criterion met inconsistently or with assistance; **0,** criterion not met

SAP Summary Form
Language Partner Stage

Child's name: _____

Quarterly start date of observation: _____ Child's age: _____

SCERTS Profile

SOCIAL COMMUNICATION

Joint Attention

JA1 Engages in reciprocal interaction

JA2 Shares attention

JA3 Shares emotion

JA4 Shares intentions to regulate the behavior of others

JA5 Shares intentions for social interaction

JA6 Shares intentions for joint attention

JA7 Persists and repairs communication breakdowns

JA8 Shares experiences in reciprocal interaction

Symbol Use

SU1 Learns by observation and imitation of actions and words

SU2 Understands nonverbal cues in familiar and unfamiliar activities

SU3 Uses familiar objects conventionally in play

SU4 Uses gestures and nonverbal means to share intentions

SU5 Uses words and word combinations to express meanings

SU6 Understands a variety of words and word combinations without contextual cues

EMOTIONAL REGULATION

Mutual Regulation

MR1 Expresses range of emotions

MR2 Responds to assistance offered by partners

MR3 Requests partners' assistance to regulate state

MR4 Recovers from extreme dysregulation with support from partners

Self-Regulation

SR1 Demonstrates availability for learning and interacting

SR2 Uses behavioral strategies to regulate arousal level during familiar activities

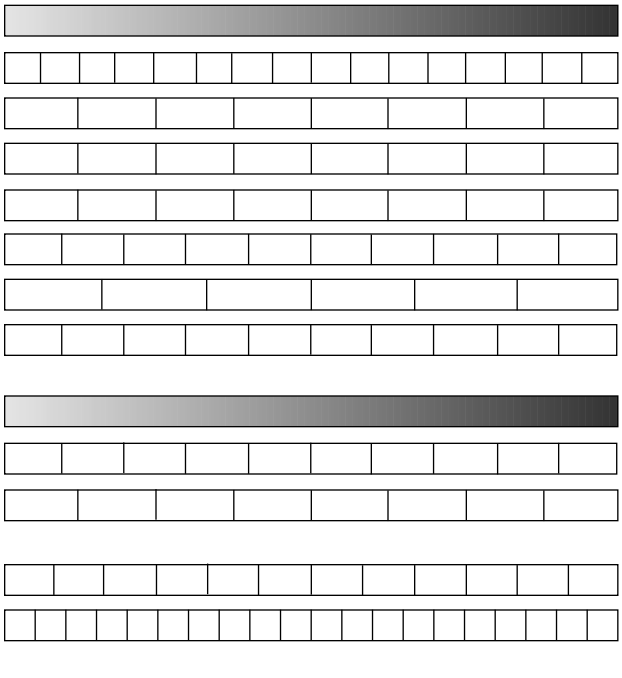
SR3 Uses language strategies to regulate arousal level during familiar activities

SR4 Regulates emotion during new and changing situations

SR5 Recovers from extreme dysregulation by self

SCERTS Profile (continued)

TRANSACTIONAL SUPPORT



Interpersonal Support

IS1 Partner is responsive to child

IS2 Partner fosters initiation

IS3 Partner respects child's independence

IS4 Partner sets stage for engagement

IS5 Partner provides developmental support

IS6 Partner adjusts language input

IS7 Partner models appropriate behaviors

Learning Support

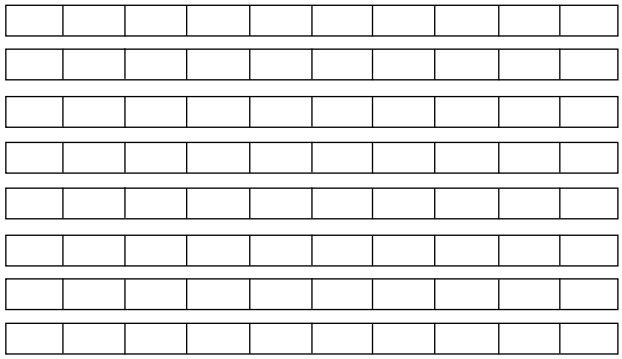
LS1 Partner structures activity for active participation

LS2 Partner uses augmentative communication support to foster development

LS3 Partner uses visual and organizational support

LS4 Partner modifies goals, activities, and learning environment

Social-Emotional Growth Indicators Profile



1. Happiness
2. Sense of Self
3. Sense of Other
4. Active Learning and Organization
5. Flexibility and Resilience
6. Cooperation and Appropriateness of Behavior
7. Independence
8. Social Membership and Friendships

Family Perception and Priorities

Is this profile an accurate picture of your child? If not, explain.

Is there any additional information that is needed to develop your child's educational plan?

If you were to focus your energies on one thing for your child, what would that be?

What skills would you like your child to learn in the next 3 months?

Further Assessment—Key Results or Additional Recommendations

SAP Activity Planning

Identify key activities using the SAP Activity Planning Form for

❑ Morning schedule ❑ Afternoon schedule

SCERTS Family Support Plan

Educational Support	
Activity	How often

Emotional Support	
Activity	How often

SCERTS Support Plan for Professionals and Service Providers

Educational Support	
Activity	How often

Emotional Support	
Activity	How often

Volume I, Chapter 8 – Sample Criterion for the Language Partner Stage

SOCIAL COMMUNICATION – SAMPLE CRITERION

Joint Attention

1 Engages in reciprocal interaction

JA1.1 **Initiates bids for interaction** (=SR1.1)
Criterion: The child initiates a bid for interaction through nonverbal or verbal means. The behavior must be **directed** to another person by proximity (moving toward or away from another person), physical contact (touching another person with a gesture or action), gaze or verbalizations paired with gaze. The behavior must be **initiated** by the child, meaning that it is not a response to another person's behavior.

JA1.2 **Engages in brief reciprocal interaction** (=SR1.2)
Criterion: The child initiates and responds to bids for interaction for at least 2 consecutive exchanges. An **exchange** consists of a turn from the child and a turn from the partner. At least one of the exchanges must be initiated by the child.

JA1.3 **Engages in extended reciprocal interaction** (=SR1.3)
Criterion: The child initiates and responds to bids for interaction for at least 4 consecutive exchanges by the child and partner. An **exchange** consists of a turn from the child and a turn from the partner. At least one of the exchanges must be initiated by the child and the child's turns need to be related to the partner's turns in topic or focus.

2 Shares attention

JA2.1 **Shifts gaze between people and objects**
Criterion: The child shifts or alternates gaze spontaneously (without prompting) between a person and an object and back at least 3 times. The gaze must be directed to another person's face. Gaze shifts may occur without a gesture or word or may support communication. The shift must be smooth and immediate (i.e., the entire sequence should occur within 2 seconds). The gaze shift must be three-point or four-point. A **three-point gaze shift** may be either a person-object-person gaze shift (i.e., when the child is looking at a person, shifts gaze to an object, and then immediately shifts back to the person) or an object-person-object gaze shift (i.e., when the child is looking at an object, shifts gaze to a person, and then immediately shifts back to the object). A **four-point gaze shift** may also be an object-person "a"-person "b"-object gaze shift (i.e., when the child is looking at an object, shifts gaze to person "a", then immediately shifts gaze to person "b", and then immediately shifts back to object).
.

JA2.2 **Follows contact and distal point** (=SU2.5)
Criterion: The child follows the reference of another person's:
1) contact point (e.g., touching an object or picture with an extended index finger) by directing gaze where the person is pointing at least two times and
2) distal point (e.g., pointing to an object or picture at least 3-5 feet away) by turning the head and directing gaze or getting an object where the person is pointing at least two times. The reference should be to the side or behind the child so that the child needs to turn his/her head at least 45°. The instruction can be accompanied by calling the child's name and saying "look" or saying "give me that" or "get that", but no other gestural, situational, or verbal cues (such as labeling the object) should be used.

JA2.3 **Monitors the attentional focus of a social partner**
Criterion: The child spontaneously follows the reference of another person's attentional focus during an ongoing activity. Evidence includes the child following the reference of another person's gesture, looking at what someone else is paying attention to, or communicating about what someone else is doing.

JA2.4 **Secures attention to oneself prior to expressing intentions** (=JA5.5)
Criterion: The child secures the attention of a social partner by calling nonverbally (e.g., tapping on shoulder or arm) or verbally (e.g., saying their name, signing their name, holding up a picture) prior to expressing communicative intentions (e.g., requesting or commenting)

3 Shares emotion

JA3.1 **Shares negative and positive emotion** (=MR3.1 and MR3.2)
Criterion: The child displays:
1) **negative emotion**, defined as a clear vocal, verbal or facial expression of distress or frustration which may be accompanied by a gesture or change in body posture, and
2) **positive emotion**, defined as a clear facial expression of pleasure or excitement, which may or may not be accompanied by a vocalization such as laughing or squealing or words.
Emotions must be "shared" with others by directing gaze toward another person's face, immediately before, during, or after the emotion display.

JA3.2 **Understands and uses symbols to express emotions** (=MR1.2)
Criterion: The child understands and uses symbols (words, signs, or pictures) to express at least one positive (e.g., happy, fun, silly) and at least one negative (e.g., mad, angry, sad) emotion.

JA3.3 **Attunes to changes in the expression of emotion** (=SU2.4 & MR2.5)
Criterion: The child attunes to changes in the expression of emotion of at least 3 partners by mirroring the emotional tone (i.e., smiles and laughs in response to the partner's positive emotion; frowns and stops moving in response to a negative expression).

JA3.4 **Describes the emotional state of another person** (↔SU5.6)
Criterion: The child notices and describes the emotional state of another person by commenting about it (e.g. "mommy sad", "Daddy mad").

4 Shares intentions to regulate the behavior of others (↔SU4-5)

JA4.1 **Requests desired food or objects**
Criterion: The child directs nonverbal (e.g., unconventional or conventional gestures, vocalizations) or verbal signals (e.g., words, signs) to get another person to give a desired food item or object. The signals must be **directed** to another person by proximity (moving toward or away from another person), physical contact (touching another person with a gesture or action), or gaze.

JA4.2 **Protests/refuses undesired food or objects**
Criterion: The child directs nonverbal or verbal signals (e.g., pushes away, says no) to get another person to remove an undesired food item or object.

JA4.3 **Requests help or other actions** (=MR3.3)
Criterion: The child directs nonverbal or verbal signals to get another person to provide help or assistance in carrying out an action that the child cannot do (e.g., opening containers, activating toys) or other actions (e.g., *taps* the chair and says "sit" to request the partner to sit down).

JA4.4 **Protests undesired actions or activities** (=MR3.4)
Criterion: The child directs nonverbal or verbal signals (e.g., pushes away, says "no", gives "stop sign" picture) to get another person to cease an undesirable action or get out of an undesirable activity.

EMOTIONAL REGULATION – SAMPLE CRITERION

Mutual Regulation

1 Expresses range of emotions

MR1.1 **Shares negative and positive emotion** (=JA 3.1)
Criterion: The child displays:

1) **negative emotion**, defined as a clear vocal, verbal or facial expression of sadness, anger, or frustration which may be accompanied by a gesture or change in body posture, and
2) **positive emotion**, defined as a clear facial expression of pleasure or excitement, which may or may not be accompanied by a vocalization such as laughing or squealing or words.

Emotions must be "shared" with others by directing gaze toward another person's face, immediately before, during, or after the emotion display.

MR1.2 **Understands and uses symbols to express emotions** (=JA3.2 & SR3.5)
Criterion: The child understands and uses symbols (words, signs, or pictures) to express at least one positive (e.g., happy, fun, silly) and at least one negative (e.g., sad, angry, frustrated) emotions.

MR1.3 **Changes emotional expression in familiar activities based on partner feedback**
Criterion: The child changes emotional expression based on verbal or nonverbal feedback from a partner in familiar activities.

2 Responds to assistance offered by partner (respondent MR)

MR2.1 **Soothes when comforted by partner**
Criterion: The child soothes or calms down quickly (i.e., within 30 seconds) when the partner offers comfort verbally or nonverbally with the exception of periods of time when the child is experiencing extreme dysregulation, fear, or violations of expectations.

MR2.2 **Engages when alerted by partner**
Criterion: The child becomes actively engaged when partner introduces alerting and organizing stimulation through social routines and motor play.

MR2.3 **Responds to bids for interaction**
Criterion: The child responds to another person's bid for interaction. The bid and response may be nonverbal or verbal. The child's response must be immediate (i.e., displayed within 5 seconds following the other person's bid) and contingent (i.e., maintains the focus of attention or topic). The child's response does not need to demonstrate comprehension of a verbal bid.

MR2.4 **Responds to changes in the expression of emotion**
Criterion: The child responds to changes in the expression of emotion by changing his/her behavior (e.g., pausing, dropping a toy, moving toward or away).

MR2.5 **Attunes to changes in expression of emotion** (=JA3.3)
Criterion: The child attunes to changes in the expression of emotion of at least 3 partners by mirroring the emotional tone (i.e., smiles and laughs in response to the partner's positive emotion; frowns and stops moving in response to a negative expression).

MR2.6 **Makes choices when offered by partner**
Criterion: The child directs nonverbal or verbal signals to make a choice when offered by the partner at least two times.

MR2.7 **Changes regulatory strategies based on partner feedback in familiar activities**
Criterion: The child changes regulatory strategies (i.e., behavioral or language strategies) based on feedback provided by the partner in familiar activities. For example, a child who "crashes" into his parent to seek pressure to decrease arousal level modifies this strategy when he is redirected to a hugging game, a child who is vocalizing loudly in anger responds to a picture card of "mad" presented to him, by touching the card or saying "mad".

3 Requests partner's assistance to regulate state (initiated MR)

MR3.1 **Shares negative emotion to seek comfort** (=JA3.1 & 5.1)
Criterion: The child displays **negative emotion** (i.e., a clear vocal or facial expression of distress or frustration which may be accompanied by a change in body posture or gesture) and shares it with another person by looking at, approaching (e.g., crawling over to), gesturing toward (e.g., raising arms to be picked up), or touching that person (pulling on pant leg) to seek comfort.

MR3.2 **Shares positive emotion to seek interaction** (=JA3.1)
Criterion: The child displays positive emotion (i.e., a clear facial expression of pleasure or excitement, which may or may not be accompanied by a vocalization (e.g., laughter, squeal) or word and shares it by looking at, approaching (e.g., crawling over to), gesturing toward (e.g., raising arms to be picked up, showing an object), or touching that person (pulling on pant leg, tapping arm) to seek interaction.

MR3.3 **Requests help when frustrated** (=JA4.3 & ↔SU4-5)
Criterion: The child directs nonverbal or verbal signals to a partner when the child needs to get another person to help when a task exceeds the child's skill level.

MR3.4 **Protests when distressed** (=JA4.2, JA4.4, & ↔SU 4-5)
Criterion: The child directs nonverbal or verbal signals (e.g., push away, saying "no" paired with gaze) to get another person to remove an undesired food item or object, to cease an undesired action, or to get out of an undesired activity at least two times.

MR3.5 **Uses language strategy to request a break**
Criterion: The child uses words (i.e., spoken, signs, or pictures) to request a break from an activity that is too difficult, overwhelming, boring, long, or undesired (e.g., child says "need break" or "stop please" or exchanges stop sign icon).

MR3.6 **Uses language strategy to request regulating activity or input**
Criterion: The child uses words (i.e., spoken, signs, or pictures) to request an activity or sensory input that will have a regulating effect on the child's state of arousal (e.g., child says "play computer" when the computer is a calming activity or "go outside" when the child needs to be aroused and get a break from sedentary activities).

MR3.7 **Uses language strategy to exert social control (**↔JA 4)
Criterion: The child uses words (i.e., spoken, signs, or pictures) to initiate social control in appropriate situations. For example, the child uses agent+ action word combinations to direct others actions in environment (e.g., "mommy go-bye bye", 'baby sleep", Daddy throw", "do it").

SAMPLE NARRATIVE TEMPLATE (CONVERSATIONAL PARTNER STAGE)
THE SCERTS ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Student Information

Name: Billy (Sample Case)
Date of Birth:
Date of report:
Chronological age: 10 years old
Team members:

Reason for Referral

Billy, a 10 year old boy with ASD, was referred for an educational planning assessment in preparation for his tri-annual IEP. He is described by his current educational team as a "kind" and "hard-working" boy, who is "smart," "funny," "innocent," and "helpful." His current interests include reading books, playing computer games, playing interactive games with adults and peers (e.g., Connect Four, Checkers, Chess, etc.), and watching Disney movies. A predictable routine and visually presented expectations, namely across and within-task written schedules are reported to be critical aspects of the physical environment that facilitate his engagement and learning. Likewise, he is reported to experience more success when provided with hands-on learning materials, coping strategies for emotional challenges, and adjusted social complexity. He currently participates in an individualized educational program at King Middle School in Anytown, US.

This current referral was made in order to obtain recommendations for educational objectives as well as recommendations regarding interpersonal and learning supports that would be appropriate for addressing these objectives. With this current assessment, recommendations were requested as they relate to the following developmental domains:

(1) Joint attention (e.g., attending to others, communicating for a range of functions, engaging in meaningful conversation, and modifying one's use of language based on a social partner's perspective),
(2) Symbol use (e.g., understanding and using more creative and generative expressive language, using appropriate nonverbal communication, and following the rules of conversation),
(3) Self-regulation (e.g., employing coping strategies to regulate arousal and emotional state, using self-talk to plan and prepare for upcoming social situations), and
(4) Mutual regulation (e.g., expressing one's emotional state, responding to coping strategies offered by partners, collaborating with peers in solving problems).

This assessment report contains a brief summary of Billy's current performance levels in these domains as well as recommendations for educational programming objectives and learning accommodations.

Assessment Protocol

Billy was observed across a range of activities with a range of familiar social partners. Following these observations, the SCERTS Assessment Protocol (SAP) (Copyright 2006 - Paul H. Brookes

Publishing, Co.) was administered using the forms for a child at the Conversational Partner Stage. This stage refers to a child who is using conversational level discourse to communicate, while developing an awareness of social perspectives, an understanding of social conventions, and strategies for maintaining active engagement across social settings.

The SAP is a criterion-referenced assessment tool that provides a means to determine Billy's current profile of strengths and needs based on his developmental stage in the domains of social communication and emotional regulation, to determine meaningful, purposeful, and motivating educational goals, and to determine the most appropriate transactional supports (e.g., interpersonal support and learning supports) for Billy's family and educational team members.

Results & Discussion

Billy's current profile of strengths and areas of need are described below. Each section contains a narrative of his current level of performance / baseline in each domain, followed by specific recommendations for educational objectives.

I. Social Communication – Joint Attention

This developmental domain refers to a child's ability to communicate with a variety of people, for a variety of functions, and in a variety of social contexts. This requires the ability to share attention with others, share emotion with others, and share experiences by considering one's listener's perspective when initiating, taking turns in conversation, selecting topics, and repairing communicative breakdowns.

Current Level of Performance

In the domain of Joint Attention, Billy demonstrated a number of relative strengths. These included his ability to initiate a range of communicative bids for the functions of requesting desired objects and activities (JA3.1a), requesting a break (JA3.1c), and protesting undesired activities (JA3.1d). He was also noted to show and emerging ability to comment on both immediate and past events (JA3.3a), provide requested information about immediate and past events (JA3.3b), and regulate social turns (JA3.2d) across partners and activities. Areas of need included Billy's ability to consistently monitor the attentional focus of a social partner (JA1.1), secure attention prior to communicating (JA1.2), and initiate topics of conversation related to a partner's interest (JA4.3).

Suggested Educational Objectives

JA4.3 – Billy will initiate and maintain conversations that relate to partners' interests across 3 activities and 3 partners in 4 out of 5 opportunities when provided with augmentative communicative support (LS2.1) as assessed through quarterly review and team consensus and an increasing number of activities per benchmark period.

II. Social Communication – Symbol Use (English Language Arts)

This developmental domain refers to the nonverbal and verbal communication that a child understands and uses to communicate and share experiences with others. This refers to a child's

ability to understand and use language, gestures, nonverbal social cues and the rules of conversation.

Current Level of Performance

In the domain of Symbol Use, Billy demonstrated a relative strength in his ability to learn through imitation (SU1.1), his ability to use behaviors modeled by partners to guide social behavior (SU1.2), and his participation in dramatic play and recreation activities with peers (SU3), as evidenced by his emerging ability to take on a role and engage in dramatic play (SU3.4), his emerging ability to play in common activities with other children (SU3.5), and his emerging ability to participate in rule-based group recreation. Areas of need were noted with respect to his ability to collaborate and negotiate with his peers in problem solving (SU1.5) and understanding and using generative language to express meanings (SU5.1 – SU5.3).

Suggested Educational Objectives

SU1.5 – Billy will collaborate with peers to solve problems across 3 activities and 3 partners in 4 out of 5 opportunities when provided with opportunities for peer modeling (IS7.4) and adjusted social complexity (LS4.1) as assessed through quarterly review and team consensus and an increasing number of activities per benchmark period.

SU5.4 – Billy will use a variety of sentence constructions (e.g., embedded and conjoined) across 3 activities and 3 partners in 4 out of 5 opportunities when provided with augmentative communication (visual support)(LS2.1) as assessed through quarterly review and team consensus and an increasing number of activities (e.g., book reports, language arts, creative writing) per benchmark period.

III. Mutual Regulation

This developmental domain refers to a child's ability to express a range of emotions, gradations of emotion, respond to assistance offered by social partners, and request assistance from others in order to remain well regulated, organized, and actively engaged in social settings.

Current Level of Performance

In the domain of Mutual Regulation, Billy demonstrated several relative strengths with respect to his ability to request a partners' assistance to regulate state (MR4), as evidenced by his consistent ability to share his negative emotions (using facial expressions and body language) to seek comfort (MR4.1), his consistent ability to share his positive emotions (using facial expressions and body language) to seek interaction (MR4.2) and his ability to share his intentions for the purposes of requesting desired objects, activities, and even assistance (MR4.3). Areas of need were noted with respect to his ability to use emotion words to express his emotion and seek comfort (MR1.1, MR1.2, and MR1.3) and respond to information or strategies offered by partners to self-regulate his arousal (MR2.6).

Suggested Educational Objectives

MR1.2- Billy will understand and use advanced emotions across 3 activities and 3 partners in 4 out of 5 opportunities when provided with visual support (LS2.4) as assessed through quarterly review and team consensus and an increasing number of activities per benchmark period.

MR2.6 – Billy will respond to information or strategies offered by partners to regulate his arousal across 3 activities and 3 partners in 4 out of 5 opportunities when provided with visual support (LS2.4) as assessed through quarterly review and team consensus and an increasing number of activities per benchmark period.

IV. Self-Regulation

This developmental domain refers to a child's ability to use increasingly mature strategies for coping during solitary activities, social activities, transitions, and emotionally distressful situations. This refers to early sensory-motor coping strategies, language strategies such as talking through the steps of a task, and planning and self-monitoring during activities.

Current Level of Performance

In the domain of Self-Regulation, Billy demonstrated a relative strength in his use of behaviors or sensory-motor actions to regulate his arousal level in both solitary and social activities (SR2.1) while areas of need included his ability to use behaviors modeled by partners to regulate his own arousal level (SR2.2) and his ability to use of language strategies to talk himself through multi-step tasks (SR3.6).

Suggested Educational Objective

1) SR3.6 - Billy will use language strategies to engage productively within extended activities across 3 activities and 3 partners in 4 out of 5 opportunities when provided with visual support to define steps within a task (LS3.1) as assessed through quarterly review and team consensus and an increasing number of activities per benchmark period.