Augmentative and Alternative Communication Needs Assessment

Name: _____   Date: _____

Introduction: This needs assessment can be completed as part of an initial AAC evaluation or as part of on-going assessment after AAC strategies and tools have been implemented. In first section, you can enter specific information about activities and communication modes. The next three sections focus on conversational topics of interest, current communication skills, and situations in which the individual would like to communicate. The final two sections focus on the skills needed by communication partners for the individual to have more successful interactions and the names of specific communication partners themselves.

Directions: Mark the appropriate column for each potential communication need listed below. Add additional needs at the end of each section. If applicable, name the communication mode (e.g., speech, gesture, facial expression, communication book, communication device) most likely to be used to express a particular need. After completing the assessment, you may wish to go back through it and highlight key information. For example, you may place a star next to the most important general topic of conversion (page 1). You may circle the two specific communication environments and partners that are highly motivating or particular favorites (page 2).

Note: The needs assessment is most effective when completed by multiple members of a team—with as much input from the individual with complex communication needs as possible.

GENERAL THINGS TO TALK ABOUT

	Would Like to Talk About	Can Already Talk About	Typical Mode of Communication (may want to indicate whether mode is effective or not)
Everyday choices (e.g., clothing, food, activities)			
Everyday activities (e.g., play, hobbies, chores)			
Work/school			
Social activities (e.g., games, coffee, cards)			
Community interactions (e.g., bank, pharmacy, bus, restaurant)			
Stories (e.g., past, upcoming events, made-up)			
Current events			
Directions			
Feelings and emotions			
Physical needs or problems			
Other:			

SPECIFIC COMMUNICATION ENVIRONMENTS AND PARTNERS

	Environment/Activity/Topic	Communication Partners
Daily		
Weekly		
Occasionally		

COMMUNICATION SKILLS

	Difficult	Can do successfully	Mode of communication most likely to be used
Getting attention			
Holding attention			
Introducing self to others			
Starting conversations			
Maintaining conversations (e.g., taking turns, making comments)			
Changing topics			
Asking questions			
Answering yes/no questions			
Answering familiar questions (e.g., "How are you?" or "What is your favorite color?")			
Answering less familiar or routine questions or comments			
Describing or discussing something in depth			
Providing detailed information			
Indicating that the communication partner was not understood			
Knowing that the communication partner does not understand message			
Restating messages when misunderstood			
Other:			

COMMUNICATION SITUATIONS

	Would like to do	Can already do	Mode of communication used
1:1 Interactions			
Holding attention			
Introducing self to others			
Group conversations			
Unfamiliar communication partners			
Telephone conversations			
Asking questions			
Written communication			
Other:			

COMMUNICATION PARTNER SKILLS

	Very Important	Not Important
Do not interrupt		
Do not guess what I am trying to say		
Guess what I am trying to say		
Starting conversations		
Give me extra time to say what I want		
Ask questions to narrow down the topic		
Give me opportunities to communicate		
Answering yes/no questions		
Use writing, drawing, or gestures to help me understand		
Help me find things in my communication book/device		
Simplify questions and statements		
Help me find things in my communication book/device		
Other:		

SPECIFIC COMMUNICATION PARTNERS

Name of best communication partner	
Name of most frequent communication partner	
Name of favorite communication partner	