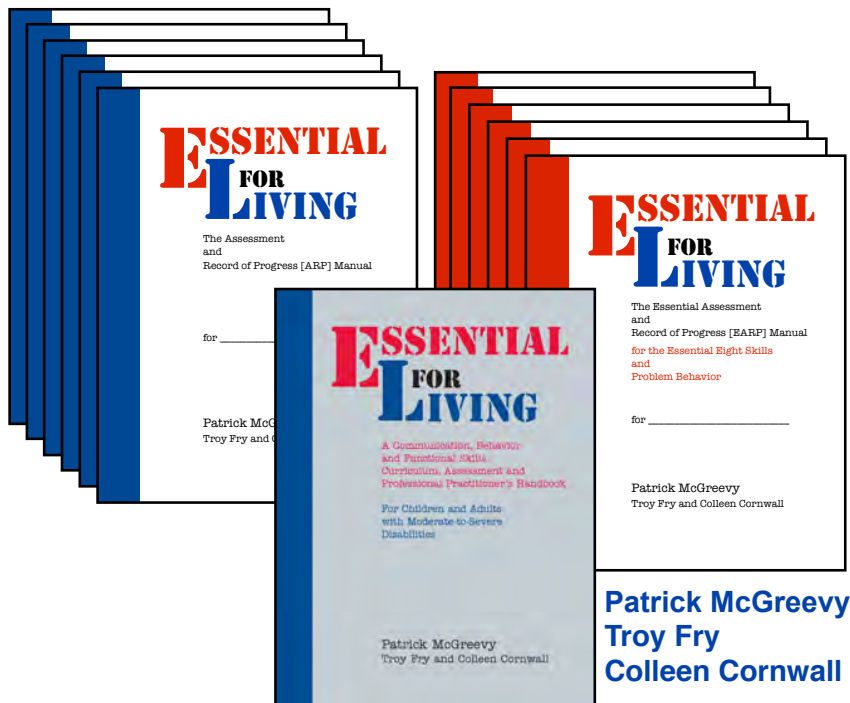


ESSENTIAL FOR LIVING

An Introduction and User Guide



A
Communication,
Behavior and
Functional Skills
Curriculum,
Assessment,
Skill-tracking
Instrument,
and
Professional
Practitioner's
Handbook

for
Children and Adults
with
Moderate-to-Severe
Disabilities

'More than just a list of skills...
it's when and how
you teach those skills'

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ESSENTIAL **FOR** **LIVING**

the most innovative and comprehensive instrument of its kind
on the market today...

1. Includes functional skills that 'matter' in the lives of learners with moderate-to-severe disabilities
2. Includes the **Essential Eight Skills** that are often absent when problem behavior occurs
3. Includes skills that are linked to the Common Core State Standards
4. Reaches learners with very limited repertoires
5. Provides a method for selecting and testing the effectiveness of an **Alternative Method of Speaking** for non-verbal learners
6. Permits the seamless inclusion of skills into IEP, ISP, program plan and hab plan goals and objectives
7. Provides a platform for transdisciplinary interactions
8. Includes easy-to-follow, evidence-based teaching procedures
9. Permits the effortless tracking of small increments of learner progress
10. Permits the tracking of skill acquisition, fluency, maintenance, and generalization
11. Permits the effortless tracking of problem behaviors and the supports these behaviors require over extended periods of time
12. Permits teachers to become comfortable using this sophisticated instrument with 1-2 days of training and a few days of practice
13. Provides a platform for fair, outcome-based teacher evaluations

**Join the increasing number of
school districts, private schools, ABA programs,
residential programs, and vocational programs**

who are using 

- 1- to select and prioritize functional skills for their IEPs, ISPs, program plans, and hab plans,
- 2- to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of their instruction and behavior management, and
- 3- to improve outcomes for the children and adults they serve

ESSENTIAL FOR LIVING

was designed for children and adults of all ages with moderate-to-severe disabilities and limited skill repertoires, specifically...

- young children with Down Syndrome, Angelmann Syndrome, Microcephaly, Cornelia de Lange Syndrome, Hunter Syndrome, and other congenital disorders that consistently result in moderate-to-severe disabilities;
- children who are struggling to become vocal;
- non-verbal children or adults who have no effective method of speaking;
- children with limited skill repertoires and/or severe forms of disruptive, aggressive, or self-injurious behavior;
- children with autism or related disorders, who, after 2-3 years of intensive, behavioral intervention, have not acquired matching or imitation skills, are not answering simple questions without scripts, are not experiencing generalization, are not beginning to exhibit novel responses, and are no longer making progress on a developmental curriculum, such as the VB-MAPP, the Early Start Denver Model, or the ABLLS;
- adults with congenital disorders and acquired conditions that result in moderate-to-severe disabilities;
- children or adults who require extensive supports or 1:1 supervision; or
- children or adults who cannot be instructed or integrated with peers or taken into the community without severe problem behavior.

The Purpose of 'Essential for Living' is to help teachers, curriculum coordinators, speech-language pathologists, QIDPs, behavior analysts, and support coordinators..

- select functional skills for instruction and problem behaviors for management, and include these selections in IEPs, ISPs, program plans, and hab plans;
- manage these problem behaviors and teach these functional skills;
- teach learners who are echolalic or who have limited vocal skills;
- select appropriate, alternative methods of speaking for non-verbal learners or learners with a limited spoken-word repertoire;
- track learner progress with respect to skills selected for instruction and problem behaviors selected for management, measure and document very small increments of that progress through skill acquisition, maintenance, and generalization, and provide reasonable and fair measures of teacher performance based on that progress; and,
- document specific supports that learners currently require, keep documentation of learner progress and required supports in one place, and make certain that this documentation 'makes it' to the learner's next classroom, residence, or program.

'Essential for Living' can be used along with developmental curricula, such as the VB-MAPP, the Early Start Denver Model, and the ABLLS...

- when young learners exhibit severe problem behavior; and
- when these learners have not acquired basic listener and daily living skills -- e.g., when they do not follow basic directions and are not toilet-trained.

The Structure and Content of Essential for Living

As shown below (and in NTK: chapter 1 of the handbook), *Essential for Living* includes seven skill domains and one domain on problem behavior. These domains are centered around *The Essential Eight Skills*, which are described on the following page. *Essential for Living* also includes a chapter on Facilitating and Teaching Spoken-word Communication and Selecting, Confirming, and Maintaining an Alternative Method of Speaking for non-verbal learners, a Quick Assessment for new users and learners with severe problem behavior, and an array of Teaching Protocols.

<i>The Essential Eight Skills</i>	
Facilitating and Teaching Spoken-word Communication and Selecting, Confirming, and Maintaining an Alternative Method of Speaking	
<i>The Essential for Living Quick Assessment</i>	
How Children and Adults Interact with the World Around Them	The Domains of <i>Essential for Living</i>
Speaking and Listening	Domain 1: Requests and Related Listener Responses (R) Domain 2: Listener Responses, Names, and Descriptions (LR, LRND) Domain 3: Answers to Questions and Conversations (AQ, C)
Doing	Domain 4: Daily Living and Related Skills (DLS) Domain 5: Functional Academic Skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responding to Text as a Listener and Reading (RTL, Rdg) • Schedules, Lists, and Time (SLT) • Math Skills (Mth) • Writing or Typing Skills (WT)
Tolerating	Domain 6: Tolerating Skills and Eggshells (T)
Inappropriate Behavior	Problem Behavior Domain (PB)
Tool Movements	Domain 7: Tool Skills and Component Skills (MM, M, Im)
Teaching Protocols	

Skills within the seven skill domains are sequenced from less to more difficult and more to less functional and designated as:

must-have,
should-have,
good-to-have, and
nice-to-have.

Assessment and teaching should generally begin with *must-have skills*.

The Essential Eight Skills

As shown below (and in NTK: chapter 1 of the handbook)...

Domain 1, **Domain 2**, **Domain 4**, and **Domain 6** include *must-have skills*.

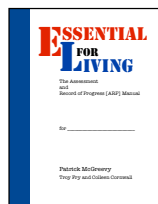
These skills, also known as *The Essential Eight*, are absolutely essential for a happy, fulfilling, and productive life as an older child or an adult, and are the central focus of *Essential for Living*. In the absence of these skills, children and adults with moderate-to-severe disabilities will, almost certainly, exhibit forms of problem behavior, have limited access to preferred items, activities, places, and people, and have limited contact and interaction with the community in which they live.

Skill Domain and the Must-have Skills within that Domain	The Essential Eight
Domain 1. Requests and Related Listener Responses (R)	
R7. Makes requests for highly preferred snack foods, drinks, nonfood items, or activities... and 13 other skills that include making requests	One. Making Requests for Access to Highly Preferred Items and Activities and for the Removal or Reduction in intensity of Specific Situations
R9. Waits after making requests for each of the items and activities in R7 and R8 for... increasing periods of time	Two. Waiting
R13. Makes transitions from preferred items and activities to required tasks... and 2 other skills that include accepting removals	Three. Accepting Removals -- the Removal of Preferred Items and Activities, Making Transitions, Sharing, and Taking Turns
R11. Completes 10 consecutive, brief, previously acquired tasks	Four. Completing Required Tasks -- 10 Consecutive, Brief, Previously Acquired Tasks
R15 & R16. 'Accepts no' after making requests...	Five. Accepting 'No'
Domain 2. Listener Responses, Names, and Descriptions (LR, LRND)	
LR2. Moves toward and stands or sits next to an instructor, care provider, or parent when directed to do so... and 10 other skills that include following directions	Six. Following Directions Related to Health and Safety
Domain 4. Daily Living and Related Skills (DLS)	
DLS-HS4. Fastens and remains in a seat belt... and 38 other skills that are part of daily living	Seven. Completing Daily Living Skills Related to Health and Safety
Domain 6. Tolerating Skills and Eggshells (T)	
T-BHI5. Tolerates touch, physical guidance, or prompts... and 70 other skills that include tolerating specific situations	Eight. Tolerating Situations Related to Health and Safety

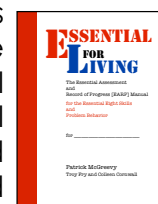
Conducting an Assessment

When to conduct an assessment. Conduct an assessment with *Essential for Living (EFL)* when you first begin working with a child or an adult. This assessment will permit you to identify deficits in functional skills and problem behaviors, and to develop goals and objectives for an IEP, ISP, behavior plan, program plan, or hab plan. Conduct additional assessments when the learner has acquired several skills or when priorities change, necessitating the selection of additional skills or problem behaviors and the development of new goals and objectives.

How to conduct an assessment of skill deficits. Begin conducting an assessment by obtaining a copy of The Assessment and Record of Progress [ARP] Manual (with the blue band on the left), which includes all the skills in *Essential for Living*. If the learner with whom you are



working has an extremely limited skill repertoire, exhibits severe forms of problem behavior, or is still acquiring skills from the VB-MAPP, the Denver Early Start curriculum, or the ABLLS, but has not acquired all of the Essential Eight Skills, you may want a copy of The Essential Assessment and Record of Progress [EARP] Manual (with the red band on the left), which includes 'just' the Essential Eight Skills and Problem Behavior.



Then, complete the following four activities as indicated:

Activity 1 -- Complete *The Essential for Living Quick Assessment* (QA: chapter 5 of the handbook) **and note 'deficits in the Essential Eight Skills' suggested by the interviewees** (see the ARP Manual, pp. 18-20 or the EARP manual, pp. 5-6).

The *EFL* Quick Assessment assists you in conducting the first assessment for a learner, especially a learner with severe problem behavior. This activity involves interviewing one or more people who know the learner. Responses during this interview suggest *possible deficits* in functional skills and problem behaviors and direct you to those specific deficits or sections within *EFL* which address those deficits. An item from the Quick Assessment is provided below.

One. Making Requests – the tendency to make requests for highly preferred items and activities

4 Makes requests for 10 or more preferred items or activities without prompts using an effective method of speaking **7a. Domain 1. R14, R17-21, R22-24, R27-28, R30-31**

3 Makes requests for 1-3 preferred items or activities with or without prompts **7a. Domain 1. R7-8**

② Makes requests by leading others to items **7a. Domain 1. R1-5, R6, R7-8**

1 Makes requests by exhibiting problem behavior **7a. Domain 1. R1-5, R6, R7-8**

Paraphrasing the description of this item, ask one or more interviewees, "Does this learner make requests for highly preferred items and activities". Then, determine which of the four options most closely resembles their responses. For example, if two interviewees say, "He makes requests by leading others to what he wants", circle option 2 as shown. Then, go to chapter **7a., Domain 1**, skills **R1-5, R6, R7-8**. To *determine other possible deficits*, complete the remaining items in the Quick Assessment. As you become more familiar with *Essential for Living*, you may want to bypass this activity, in favor of Activity 3.

Activity 2 -- Determine the learner's vocal profile, that is, the extent and understandability of the learner's spoken-word repertoire; if necessary, select and confirm an alternative, primary method of speaking (MS: chapter 6 of the handbook); and indicate this method on the inside front cover of the ARP or EARP Manual.

This activity was designed for children and adults with a limited repertoire of spoken words or no spoken words at all. This includes learners who are often described as either echolalic or non-verbal. This also includes learners who have been provided with an alternative method of speaking which is ineffective, that is, which does not permit them to *easily, efficiently, and continuously* make requests for preferred items, activities, places, and people.

Activity 2 is described in MS: chapter 6 of *Essential for Living*, which was co-authored by Janine Shapiro, a speech-language pathologist and behavior analyst. *Essential for Living is the only curriculum or assessment instrument on the market today that includes such a chapter.*

Activity 2 will help you determine...

When to select 'saying words' or an alternative primary method of speaking, in other words, when 'saying words' can function as a learner's primary method of speaking and when you will need to select an alternative method of speaking.

Making this decision is accomplished by aligning your learner with one of six Vocal Profiles based on that learner's repertoire of spoken words and spoken-word repetitions and the extent to which these repertoires are understandable. And, when an alternative method is necessary, these profiles help you decide how to allocate resources between increasing the learner's spoken-word repertoire and selecting, confirming, and maintaining an alternative method.

Two of the six Vocal Profiles are provided below.

Vocal Profile 2 -- Uncontrolled and Controlled Spoken-word Repetitions

This profile describes learners who exhibit many understandable spoken words and phrases, but only as repetitions of what others have said. Some of these repetitions are controlled, that is, if an instructor says "say, car", these learners will say "car"; more frequently, however, these repetitions are uncontrolled, that is, learners will say "say, car".

If your learner can be aligned with this profile, you should use a specific teaching procedure that is part of Teaching Protocol 1 (see the echoic-to-request transfer procedure on page 265 of the handbook), and 'saying words' should be selected and confirmed as the learner's primary method of speaking. And, all resources should be committed to a goal for the learner of spontaneous requests with spoken words.

Vocal Profile 3 -- Occasional Words and Phrases

This profile describes learners who exhibit a limited number of spoken words and phrases, which are understandable but which occur infrequently across situations, inconsistently within the same situation, and rarely as spoken-word repetitions.

As the diagram indicates, this learner is **hearing, sighted, ambulatory, and active**, with **good fine motor coordination, limited fine motor imitation, no matching skills**, and **problem behavior**.

The selection diagram is then superimposed on diagrams for each of 46 alternative methods of speaking, which depict the repertoires that tend to occur when each of these methods is effective, along with the advantages of spoken words that each method retains. As shown below, The Selection Diagram for this learner was superimposed on the diagram for Alternative Method of Speaking 2 (AMS 2), Forming Standard Signs.

The Learner's Current Sensory, Skill, and Behavioral Repertoires																
H	S	HI	VI	HVI	Am	NAm	A	I	FM	<FM	MI	<MI	M	<M	PB	-PB
Alternative Method of Speaking		AMS 2: Forming standard signs (e.g., Signed English)														
The Repertoires that Tend to Occur When AMS 2 is Effective																
H	S	HI	VI	HVI	Am	NAm	A	I	FM	<FM	MI	<MI	M	<M	PB	-PB
The Advantages of 'Saying Words' Retained by AMS 2																
Speaker	P	E	1S	-CD	Rq	ND	AQ	Con	Rd	RA	Large Audience		LA			

As indicated by the boxes in bold, there were seven 'repertoire matches', suggesting that this method should be set aside for consideration as an alternative, primary method of speaking for this learner. Then, after superimposing The Selection Diagram on the remaining alternative methods of speaking, several other methods with a similar number of 'matches' should also be set aside for further consideration.

Then, with the methods that have been set aside, a second step in the selection process is added, which examines the extent to which these methods retain the advantages of 'spoken words' with respect to the speaker and the audience. These advantages are listed below and shown in the diagram above:

- P** -- Children and adults can convey messages at any place and time without need for environmental supports
- E** -- Information can be conveyed with very little effort
- 1S** -- In the beginning, only one-step (i.e., single-word) responses are required
- CD** -- In the beginning, complex discriminations are not required
- Rq** -- Many requests can be easily conveyed
- ND** -- Many items, activities, people, & places can be clearly named and described
- AQ** -- Answers to questions can clearly and easily occur
- Con** -- Conversation can easily occur
- Rd** -- Reading can be taught
- RA** -- Requests can be conveyed in the absence of what is being requested... and,

LA -- The speaker can be understood by a large audience of instructors, care providers, parents, and peers with and without disabilities who do not require training

As shown in the diagram on the previous page, 'AMS 2: Forming standard signs' retains all ten advantages of spoken words with respect to functioning as a speaker, but results in a much smaller audience.

From the methods that have been set aside, the one that retains the greatest number of advantages of spoken words, with respect to both the learner and the learner's audience, is generally selected as the learner's alternative, primary method of speaking.

Activity 2 will also help you learn...

How to confirm an alternative, primary method of speaking

In order to confirm an alternative, primary method of speaking for a specific learner, *Essential for Living* describes eight procedures that should be used to test the effectiveness of this method. Three of these procedures are provided below.

- providing a minimum of 2-3 months of daily instruction;
- teaching a learner to 'make requests' for specific, highly preferred items, activities, and persons, NOT to 'name or describe' items or persons, NOT 'to comment' on experiences, and NOT to 'answer questions';
- teaching requests for specific items, activities, and persons (see R6, R19, R20, and, for some learners, R13, R15, R16, R17, and R18); NOT requests for 'more', 'food', or 'eat' and NOT requests with 'please', 'yes', or 'no';

When you have used these procedures and collected data for 2-3 months, you should begin to estimate the effectiveness of the selected, alternative, primary method of speaking using the following criteria:

- the requesting repertoire...is improving rapidly (8-10 requests for new items or activities per month)...or...is continuing to improve gradually (1-2 requests for new items or activities per month, or in some cases, per year)...or...includes most of the learner's preferred items and activities;
- the audience responds appropriately to the learner's requests (i.e. provides what the learner requests);
- the learner makes frequent, spontaneous requests throughout the day; and
- the frequency of self-injurious, aggressive, destructive, or disruptive behavior has decreased significantly.

If any of these four criteria are not met, this method should be rejected and another method should be selected.

Activity 2 will also help you learn...

How to maintain, expand, and extend the use of an alternative, primary method of speaking

In order to make certain that a learner's alternative method of speaking endures into the future, expands the learner's speaking repertoire, and extends that repertoire to several environments, five goals must be accomplished. Two of these goals are provided below.

- to make certain that the learner's method of speaking is as portable as possible, insuring frequent responding as a speaker, and
- to capture and contrive many opportunities each day for the learner to respond as a speaker,

Activity 2 will also help you learn...

How to select, confirm, and maintain concurrent, back-up, and secondary methods of speaking

Some learners will require concurrent methods, that is, two methods at the same time; others will require back-up methods to increase the size of their audience, and still others will require secondary methods that increase the extent of the speaker repertoire. Procedures for selecting, confirming, and maintaining these methods are also described.

Activity 3 -- Scan the Must-have Skills, which are part of Domain 1 (R), Domain 2 (LR, LRND), Domain 4 (DLS), and Domain 6 (T) (a.k.a., The Essential Eight Skills) and note 'possible skill deficits' not suggested by Activity 1; if there are no apparent 'must-have skill deficits', proceed to the 'should-have' and the 'good-to-have skills' in each of the Seven Skill Domains, using the First Things First Diagram (see page 14, and the diagram on page 17 of the handbook).

If you completed Activity 1, and have assembled a list of 'possible skill deficits' for your learner, you may bypass Activity 3 or add to this list by completing this activity. If you did not complete Activity 1, complete Activity 3 now.

Using one of the learner scoring manuals, begin scanning the must-have items in **Domain 1 (R)**, circling items with a pencil that, your knowledge and experience with the learner suggest are 'possible skill deficits'...

R1-5. Interests of the learner...as determined by instructors, parents, and care providers, and... as indicated by the learner

R1 R2 R3 R4 R5

R6. Exhibits a reliable motor movement that permits a learner to use an alternative method of speaking which includes selecting photographs, pic-symbols, printed words, or letters

R7. Makes requests for highly preferred snack foods, drinks, non-food items, or activities that can be made frequently and immediately available

R8. Requests the opportunity to entertain themselves or to reduce anxiety by making stereotypic movements with highly preferred items or engaging in highly preferred stereotypic activities

R9. Waits after making requests for each of the items and activities in R7 and R8 for gradually increasing periods of time

R10. Accepts the removal of access to 10 items or activities from R7 and R8 by a person in authority

Continue with the must-have skills in **Domain 2 (LR, LRND)**...

LR1. Holds and maintains contact with the hand of an instructor, care provider, or parent when directed to do so

LR2. Moves toward and stands or sits next to an instructor, care provider, or parent when directed to do so

LR3. Moves toward and stands or remains in a line when directed to do so

the must-have skills in **Domain 4 (DLS)**..., and

DLS-EDF1. Consumes thick or thickened liquids orally

DLS-Slp1. Goes to sleep at bedtime

DLS-MT1. Transported from/to a bed, the toilet, a gait trainer, a walker, a wheelchair, or a MOVE device with a hoist

DLS-AHS1. Does not pick up knives, scissors, and razors without supervision or training

DLS-HS1. Performs required exercises or therapeutic activities and...

the must-have skills in **Domain 6 (T)**...

T-BH11. The sight, sound, or scent of an unfamiliar person

T-EDF1. A gastrostomy or nasogastric tube

T-DM1. Medication hidden in food

T-Slp1. Parents' bed

T-Toil1. Someone changing your diaper

T-PRM1. A bed chair

T-PTA1. Glasses or contact lenses

T-PEMR1. A helmet

T-BPH1. Someone washing your hands

T-DD1. Someone brushing your teeth

If there are no apparent 'must-have skill deficits', proceed to the 'should-have' and 'good-to-have skills' in each of the Seven Skill Domains.

Activity 4 -- Confirm and determine the extent of the 'skill deficits' suggested by Activities 1 and 3, using the procedures described and illustrated on pages 28-29 of the EFL Handbook; and, indicate the learner's performance on the assessment as shown below.

From the skill deficits suggested by Activity 1 and/or those circled in Activity 3, begin to complete the assessment process by placing the learner in the situations in which these skills typically occur and recording the learner's initial performance.

You can use your own method of recording this performance or the method suggested by *Essential for Living*, an example of which is shown below and in a video, which will be available soon on www.essentialforliving.com.

R7. Makes requests for highly preferred snack foods, drinks, non-food items, ...														
1 crackers	IA	IM	-SA	-DC	-RP	FP	PP	MP	Ind	2S	2P	<M	NI	Det
2 grape juice	IA	IM	-SA	-DC	-RP	FP	PP	MP	Ind	2S	2P	<M	NI	Det

When motivating events occur, learners request specific items, activities, or persons, or request specific information consistent with those events on three consecutive occasions...

IA [the initial assessment of this skill has been completed]

IM [instruction or management has begun]

-SA without self-injurious, aggressive, or destructive behavior

-DC without disruptive behavior or complaints

-RP without resistance to prompts and without leaving the area

FP with a full physical, full demonstration, or full echoic prompt

PP with a partial physical, partial demonstration, or partial echoic prompt

MP with a minimal touch, minimal gestural, or minimal echoic prompt

Ind without prompts, without scrolling, and within two seconds

2S in two or more settings

2P in the presence of either of two people

<M when motivating events have occurred, but are weak

NI when the learner does not have sensory contact with the requested item or activity (does not apply to some requests)

Det [requests are no longer occurring consistently]

This method permits an extremely sensitive measure of learner performance, which takes into account...**problem behavior, resistance to prompts, prompt-fading, fluency, generalization, and maintenance over time.**

In the example shown above, an initial assessment of skill R7, Making Requests for Highly Preferred Snack Foods, Drinks, Non-food Items, or Activities that can be made Frequently and Immediately Available, was conducted for our learner, who has a history of aggressive and self-injurious behavior and no method of speaking. Activity 2 was completed and AMS 3, Forming a Repertoire of Standard, Adapted, and Idiosyncratic Signs, was selected as his alternative method of speaking. Skill R7 was indicated as a 'possible skill deficit' during Activities 1 & 3, both of which were conducted. Based on a preference assessment (R5), two items, crackers and grape juice, were selected for the assessment of this skill.

The teacher sat down with several learners during snack time. She began by making the crackers and grape juice available and waiting until our learner indicated that he wanted the crackers by reaching for them. When he did so, she waited a few seconds before prompting the designated sign. He did not exhibit self-injurious or aggressive behavior (indicated by shading the **-SA** box in yellow). Also, he did not exhibit disruptive behavior or complaining, or resistance to prompts (indicated by shading the **-DC** and **-RP** boxes in yellow).

Since he had no previous experience with this new sign and he did not imitate motor movements, he required a full, physical prompt in order to form the sign (indicated by shading the **FP** box in yellow). This concluded the initial assessment of 'requesting crackers' (indicated by shading the **IA** box in yellow). Since our learner did not reach for the grape juice, an assessment of requesting this item was conducted later. Meanwhile, the teacher conducted several other initial assessments of skill R7 with other learners at the snack table.

For our learner, the teacher completed Activity 4 with 8 of 20 the 'possible skill deficits' that emerged from Activities 1 and 3. She did not continue Activity 4 with other 'possible deficits', as she felt that the 8 confirmed deficits would keep her busy for some time. She planned to continue with Activity 4 and the other 'possible deficits' when significant progress was made on the 8 confirmed deficits.

How to conduct an assessment of problem behavior. Begin conducting an assessment of specific problem behaviors by completing Activity 1 and noting the responses of interviewees to the *Quick Assessment* or by carefully observing each learner and...

- defining problem behaviors as instances or episodes, and designate each as self-injurious (**SIB**), aggressive (**Agg**), destructive (**Des**), disruptive (**Dis**), or repetitive (**Rep**);
- recording the daily frequency of instances or episodes of these behaviors on the Problem Behavior Direct Observation and Interview Form or a data sheet of your choice and display these data on a graph or chart;
- recording the intensity of these behaviors (**Sev, Mod, Mild**);
- recording the extent to which protective equipment or mechanical restraints are used and specify whether either is continuous (**PEA** or **MRA**) or contingent (**PEC** or **MRC**);
- recording the extent to which crisis stabilization procedures (**CS**) are used;
- recording the extent to which the learner exhibits self-restraint (**SR**); and,
- after 6-10 days, transferring these data to the *ARP* or the *EARP* Manual (see next page).

Then, begin conducting a **functional assessment** by estimating which of the Essential Eight Skills did not occur when these behaviors occurred and, thereby, indirectly estimating their function. Three of the *Essential Eight Skills* and their likely functions are shown below.

The Essential Eight and the Likely Functions of Problem Behaviors that Occur in the Absence of These Skills

The Essential Eight: Eight Must-have Skills that are part of Skill Domains 1, 2, 4, and 6		
One. MAKING REQUESTS for an audience	One. MAKING REQUESTS for the removal or reduction in intensity of non-preferred situations	One. MAKING REQUESTS for preferred items and activities
One. MAKING REQUESTS for companionship	Two. WAITING	
One. MAKING REQUESTS for affection	Three. ACCEPTING REMOVALS -- the Removal of Preferred Items and Activities, Making Transitions, Sharing, and Taking Turns	
The Likely Functions of Problem Behaviors that Occur in the Absence of The Essential Eight		
attention	avoidance or escape from demands, and, possibly, attention as well	access to tangible items or activities, and, possibly, attention as well

Or, begin conducting a **formal, functional assessment**.

An initial assessment of problem behavior for a learner with self-injurious behavior and a limited speaking repertoire is described below and depicted in the diagram:

The learner hits his own head with his fist, typically in the absence of 'making requests' (R7) and 'waiting after making requests' (R9). His treatment team decided to record episodes of this behavior, rather than instances, as 'hits' often occur in rapid succession, making them difficult to record. During the initial assessment, the intensity was severe (Sev); episodes occurred from 20-50 times per day (20-50D). The learner was taking 2 psychoactive medications per day (Med2), wore a protective helmet continuously (PEA, PE), did not require mechanical restraints (-MR), and did not exhibit self-restraint (-SR). He did, however, require the use of crisis stabilization procedures from 2-5 hours per week (CS 2-5hW).

PB1 (Problem Behavior 1): hits own head with his fist											
IA	IM	Instance		Episode	SIB	Agg	Des	Dis	Rep		
						Sev	Mod	Mild			
Med3>	Med3+	Med3+<	Med2>	Med2	Med2<	Med1>	Med1	Med1<	-Med		
PEA	PEC				PE>2	PE>1	PE	PE<1	PE<2	PE<3	-PE
MRA	MRC				MR>2	MR>1	MR	MR<1	MR<2	MR<3	-MR
		CS>5hW	CS 2-5hW	CS 1-2hW	CS 30m-1hW	CS<30mW	-CS				
		SR>2	SR>1	SR	SR<1	SR<2	SR<3	-SR			
>100D	50-100D	20-50D	10-20D	1-10D	<1D	<1W	<1M	<1Y			

PB1 occurs in the absence of these skills:

R7 & R9

<p>Mechanical Restraints:</p> <p>MRA- continuous MRC- contingent</p> <p>MR>2 have been increased twice</p> <p>MR>1 have been increased once</p> <p>MR at the time of the initial assessment</p> <p>MR<1 have been partially faded once</p> <p>MR<2 have been partially faded twice</p> <p>MR<3 have been partially faded 3 times</p> <p>-MR are not required</p>	<p>Protective Equipment:</p> <p>PEA- continuous PEC- contingent</p> <p>PE>2 has been increased twice</p> <p>PE>1 has been increased once</p> <p>PE at the time of the initial assessment</p> <p>PE<1 has been partially faded once</p> <p>PE<2 has been partially faded twice</p> <p>PE<3 has been partially faded 3 times</p> <p>-PE is not required</p>
<p>Crisis Stabilization Procedures:</p> <p>CS>5hW are used more than 5 hrs./week</p> <p>CS2-5hW are used 2-5 hrs./week</p> <p>CS1-2hW are used 1-2 hrs./week</p> <p>CS30m-1hW are used 30 mins. -- 1 hr./week</p> <p>CS<30mW are used < 30 mins./week</p> <p>-CS are not required</p>	<p>Self-restraints:</p> <p>SR>2 have been increased twice</p> <p>SR>1 have been increased once</p> <p>SR at the time of the initial assessment</p> <p>SR<1 have been partially faded once</p> <p>SR<2 have been partially faded twice</p> <p>SR<3 have been partially faded 3 times</p> <p>-SR self-restraints are not occurring</p>

<p>Type of Problem Behavior: SIB: Self-injurious Agg: Aggressive Des: Destructive Dis: Disruptive Rep: Repetitive</p>	<p>Psychoactive Medications: Med 3+> 3 + medications with some increases in dosage Med 3+ 3 + medications Med 3+< 3 + medications with some reductions in dosage Med 2> 2 medications with some increases in dosage Med 2 2 medications Med 2< 2 medications with some reductions in dosage Med 1> 1 medication with some increases in dosage Med 1 1 medication Med 1< 1 medication with some reductions in dosage -Med No medications</p>
<p>Intensity of Problem Behavior: Sev: Severe Mod: Moderate Mild: Mild</p>	

Teaching and Recording Learner Progress

Teaching Specific Skills and Managing Problem Behaviors. After conducting an assessment of functional skill deficits and problem behaviors, begin reducing the extent of those deficits, along with the intensity and frequency of those behaviors, by using the Teaching Protocols that begin on page 265 of the *Essential for Living* handbook. Each of these protocols includes procedures that have been validated in the scientific literature. The first four steps of Teaching Protocol 1 are provided below.

Teaching Protocol 1. Making Requests (**R7-8, R14, R17-21**)
 [this protocol includes [the echoic-to-request teaching procedure](#) and can be used with any skill that includes making requests]

What to Do

1. [Make items and activities available that are highly preferred; wait for the learner to indicate by gesturing what he 'wants' at that moment; proceed to step 2 or 3](#)
2. [For learners aligned with Vocal Profiles 1 or 2 \(i.e., learners who reliably repeat spoken words\) immediately provide an echoic prompt -- say the word or phrase that corresponds to the item or activity the learner wants \(e.g., "cookie"\); if a learner's repetitions are controlled, also provide a vocal cue to do so \(e.g., "say, \(pause\) cookie"\)](#)

[For learners who use an alternative method of speaking, provide an immediate full demonstration prompt or a full physical prompt of the sign, picture or word selection, or typed word until the learner makes the appropriate response; then, proceed to step 4](#)

3. [If the learner makes the appropriate response several consecutive times, begin to fade the prompts; fade echoic prompts all-at-once, fade demonstration prompts all-at-once or gradually, and fade full physical prompts gradually; proceed to step 4](#)

What Not to Do

1. Say, "What do you want?"
2. Say part of the word or phrase...

or, provide a partial demonstration or partial physical prompt

- If the learner exhibits the appropriate word, forms the appropriate sign, selects the appropriate picture or printed word, or types the appropriate word, say the word and provide access to the requested item or activity; if a learner who uses an alternative method of speaking, says part or all of the word, provide an additional amount or duration of the item or activity; proceed to steps 1 & 3 until all prompts have been completely faded; continue returning to step 1 until the learner is making 10 requests from **R7, R8, R14, and R17-21**

Recording Learner Progress. Some people choose to record learner progress by using their own data sheets, graphs, or anecdotal progress notes. *Essential for Living*, however, provides a sensitive method of recording learner progress that should be strongly considered. And, while it requires several weeks to become familiar with this method, the outcome is the documentation and summarization of small increments of learner progress with respect to both functional skills and problem behaviors.

Shown below is an assessment of a specific skill (R7) previously depicted on page 13 of this guide.

R7. Makes requests for highly preferred snack foods, drinks, non-food items, ...															
1 crackers	IA	IM	-SA	-DC	-RP	FP	PP	MP	Ind	2S	2P	<M	NI	Det	
2 grape juice	IA	IM	-SA	-DC	-RP	FP	PP	MP	Ind	2S	2P	<M	NI	Det	

When motivating events occur, learners request specific items, activities, or persons, or request specific information consistent with those events on three consecutive occasions...

- IA** [the initial assessment of this skill has been completed]
- IM** [instruction or management has begun]
- SA** without self-injurious, aggressive, or destructive behavior
- DC** without disruptive behavior or complaints
- RP** without resistance to prompts and without leaving the area
- FP** with a full physical, full demonstration, or full echoic prompt
- PP** with a partial physical, partial demonstration, or partial echoic prompt
- MP** with a minimal touch, minimal gestural, or minimal echoic prompt
- Ind** without prompts, without scrolling, and within two seconds
- 2S** in two or more settings
- 2P** in the presence of either of two people
- <M** when motivating events have occurred, but are weak
- NI** when the learner does not have sensory contact with the requested item or activity (does not apply to some requests)
- Det** [requests are no longer occurring consistently]

After the assessment was completed, instruction was begun using Teaching Protocol 1 and data was collected using a first-opportunity, probe, self-graphing data sheet, which was downloaded from www.essentialforliving.com. A portion of this data sheet is shown on the top of the next page.

Essential for Living
Makes Requests: First Opportunity of the Day Probe Data Recording Form

Specific Request	Day/Date and First Opportunity of the Day Probe												
	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F
R7. crackers	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI	NI
	<M	<M	<M	<M	<M	<M	<M	<M	<M	<M	<M	<M	<M
	2P	2P	2P	2P	2P	2P	2P	2P	2P	2P	2P	2P	2P
	2S	2S	2S	2S	2S	2S	2S	2S	2S	2S	2S	2S	2S
	Ind	Ind	Ind	Ind	Ind	Ind	Ind	Ind	Ind	Ind	Ind	Ind	Ind
	MP	MP	MP	MP	MP	MP	MP	MP	MP	MP	MP	MP	MP
	PP	PP	PP	PP	PP	PP	PP	PP	PP	PP	PP	PP	PP
	FP	FP	FP	FP	FP	FP	FP	FP	FP	FP	FP	FP	FP
	-RP	-RP	-RP	-RP	-RP	-RP	-RP	-RP	-RP	-RP	-RP	-RP	-RP
	-DC	-DC	-DC	-DC	-DC	-DC	-DC	-DC	-DC	-DC	-DC	-DC	-DC
	-SA	-SA	-SA	-SA	-SA	-SA	-SA	-SA	-SA	-SA	-SA	-SA	-SA
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Several days each week, the teacher conducted one or more instructional sessions during snack and lunch time. Before the first session of the day, she provided the learner with an opportunity to respond without prompts and only added prompts when they were necessary for him to make the request. The learner's performance on this first opportunity was recorded on this data sheet and no other data on this skill were recorded that day.

As shown on the data sheet, the learner continued to require a full, physical prompt on the first two days of instruction. On the first day of the following week, however, on the first opportunity of that day, he made the request with only a partial, physical prompt. Then, on Tuesday and Thursday of that week, he repeated that same performance. Then, as a result of three consecutive instances of improved performance on the first opportunity of the day, his teacher recorded this performance in his scoring manual (see below).

R7. Makes requests for highly preferred snack foods, drinks, non-food items, ...														
1 crackers	IA	IM	-SA	-DC	-RP	FP	PP	MP	Ind	2S	2P	<M	NI	Det
2 grape juice	IA	IM	-SA	-DC	-RP	FP	PP	MP	Ind	2S	2P	<M	NI	Det

When motivating events occur, learners request specific items, activities, or persons, or request specific information consistent with those events on three consecutive occasions...

- IA** [the initial assessment of this skill has been completed]
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- NI** when the learner does not have sensory contact with the requested item or activity (does not apply to some requests)
- Det** [requests are no longer occurring consistently]

The **PP** box was shaded in green to indicate the change in performance. Additional improvements in performance on the first opportunity of the day for three consecutive days during the same school year will be indicated by shading the appropriate boxes in green. Improvements in performance in subsequent years will be indicated by other colors. Additional assessments will continue to be shaded in yellow.

If a deterioration in performance were to occur, the **Det** box would be circled in pencil and an arrow would be drawn from that box to the box that indicates the deteriorated performance. As shown in the diagram below, the learner, who was responding with a partial physical prompt, began to wait for a full physical prompt. When, the learner's performance returned to its previous level, the pencil marks were erased.

R7. Makes requests for highly preferred snack foods, drinks, non-food items, ...														
1 crackers	IA	IM	-SA	-DC	-RP	FP	PP	MP	Ind	2S	2P	<M	NI	Det
2 grape juice	IA	IM	-SA	-DC	-RP	FP	PP	MP	Ind	2S	2P	<M	NI	Det

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- Det** [requests are no longer occurring consistently]

As has been shown on the past few pages, the learner's performance on all skills that have been assessed can be precisely documented. And, on skills in which instruction has begun, small increments of progress or deterioration can also be documented.

In each of the learner scoring manuals, performance on these skills can also be summarized 'by skill number' or 'by skill number and current performance level'. Small segments of each of these summary pages are provided below and on the next page. The first is a summary 'by skill number', which is shown below.

A Summary of the Learner's Assessments and Subsequent Progress on The Essential Eight Skills (SAP)

Must-have Indications of interest, Requests, and Related Listener Responses.... Part of Domain 1 (R)

Indications of Interest and Initial Requests

R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	R7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
----	----	----	----	----	----	----	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

Special Requests and Waiting

R8	1	2	R9	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
----	---	---	----	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

Some of the Skills of Essential for Living

There are hundreds of must-have, should-have, good-to-have, and nice-to-have skills which are included in the seven skill domains of *Essential for Living*. Some of these skills are listed on the next few pages .

Domain 1: Requests and Related Listener Responses

- R1-5. Interests of the learner... as determined by instructors, parents, and care providers, and... as indicated by the learner
- R7. Makes requests for highly preferred snack foods, drinks, non-food items, or activities that can be made frequently and immediately available
- R9. Waits after making requests for each of the items and activities in R7 and R8 for gradually increasing periods of time
- R15. 'Accepts no' after making requests for items and activities that were taught and are often honored (R7, R8, and R14)
- R17. Makes very forceful and repeated requests for a stranger, an intruder, a person teasing, threatening, bullying, or instigating a fight, or a person making sexual advances to 'go away'
- R18. Makes a generalized request for help in a threatening or dangerous situation, by yelling "help", screaming, or otherwise making contact with an audience, calling '9-1-1', or activating a medical alert device
- R19. Makes a generalized request for an audience, followed by requests for items or activities in R7 and R8
- R23. Makes requests for highly preferred items and activities that cannot be made either frequently or immediately available
- R28. Says "thank you" when requests are honored
- R38. Makes a request to delay the onset of a required activity
- R44. Makes requests from peers
- R47. Makes a request for assistance during menstruation
- R49. Makes a request for privacy and to increase personal space
- R54. Makes a request for others to clarify something they have said
- R59. Makes a request to perform an activity without assistance
- R72. Makes requests that require 2 words, signs, or pictures and that include a specific item or activity, for which a request was previously acquired, along with a feature or a specific quantity
- R84. Makes requests for information, with 2-4 key words or signs, regarding the location of items, people, or places, some with features ['where' questions]

Domain 2: Listener Responses, Names, and Descriptions

- LR1. Holds and maintains contact with the hand of an instructor, care provider, or parent when directed to do so
- LR2. Moves toward and stands or sits next to an instructor, care provider, or parent when directed to do so
- LR10. Turns toward others when her/his name is called and makes two consecutive listener responses from LR1-9
- LR11. Fastens a seat belt while in a car, a car seat, or a mobility device and remains in the seat belt for gradually increasing periods of time when directed to do so
- LR12. Completes five activities of dressing and personal hygiene when directed to do so
- LRND1.1 Breakfast -- Recognizes a spoon, a bowl, and a cup; Retrieves a spoon, a bowl, and a cup; Relocates a spoon, a bowl, and a cup (to the dishwasher); Names a spoon; Wipes the table; Describes wiping the table

Domain 3: Answers to Questions and Conversations

- AQ.1.1 Breakfast -- When a spoon, bowl, or cup is missing, answers the question 'What do you need'
- C1.1 Breakfast -- Participates in a conversation with two exchanges

Domain 4: Daily Living and Related (Leisure and Vocational) Skills

- DLS-EDF1. Consumes thick or thickened liquids orally
- DLS-EDF4. Chews three soft foods
- DLS-EDF18. Wipes mouth and hands with a napkin
- DLS-EDF21. Feeds self cereal
- DLS-MM4. Administers own pills or vitamins using a weekly pill sorter
- DLS-Slp5. Remains in own bed throughout the night
- DLS-MT8. Walks with a gait trainer
- DLS-MT16. Rides a train, bus, or taxi to 5 specific locations
- DLS-Toil6. Urinates and defecates in the toilet
- DLS-BPH1. Washes hands
- DLS-BPH8. Applies and changes a sanitary napkin or tampon during menstruation
- DLS-BPH19. Applies deodorant
- DLS-AHS10. Does not plug in or touch an iron
- DLS-AHS12. Does not put harmful, non-nutritive items in their mouth
- DLS-D25. Puts on socks, stockings, or leggings
- DLS-D32. Fastens shoes with velcro
- DLS-SIT12. Completes two-response tasks while working alone
- DLS-SIT15. Returns to tasks after significant interruptions
- DLS-SIT16. Participates in instruction with 2-4 peers
- DLS-V3. Participates in supported employment
- DLS-RDA5. Cleans own room
- DLS-HS4. Fastens and remains in a seat belt for the duration of specific trips
- DLS-HS8. Engages in safe, personal, sexual behavior in an appropriate setting
- DLS-C2. Washes and dries dishes

Domain 5: Functional Academic Skills

Responses to Text as a Listener and Reading Skills

- RTL2. Responds appropriately to public safety, street, and emergency signs (e.g., 'Walk', 'Don't Walk', 'Wet Floor')
- RTL11. Selects items from restaurant menus that include printed-words or Braille letters, such as, 'blueberry waffles', 'scrambled eggs and bacon with toast', 'cheeseburger and french fries', and others
- Rdg4. Reads the text on containers of common food and non-food items that represent some risk of safety (e.g., 'Ant and Roach Spray', 'Furniture Polish')

Schedules, Lists, and Time

- SLT1. Participates in events and activities slated to occur later that same day using a personal, daily, picture or tactile schedule

Math Skills

- Mth1. Counts a specified number of items from 1-10 using an inset counting jig
- Mth10. Makes purchases using a debit or credit card
- Mth12. Makes purchases with coins using a vending machine

Writing or Typing Skills

- WT7. Writes, types, or Braille writes words that often appear on shopping lists

Domain 6: Tolerating Skills and Eggshells

T-EDF1.	A gastrostomy or nasogastric tube
T-EDF3.	Thickened liquids
T-DM9.	Ventilation and suction
T-BHI5.	Touch, guidance, or physical prompts
T-PTA9.	AFOs
T-C1.	Someone putting on your clothes
T-DD1.	Someone brushing your teeth
T-Trp3.	Seat Belt
T-Toil9.	Public restrooms
T-PRM3.	A corner chair
T-ORM1.	A heart and lung examination with a stethoscope
T-BHI7.	The word “no” or other indications of disapproval or incorrect responding
T-BDA2.	A change in a schedule or sequence of events
T-BDA5.	Not being first or first in line
T-HC2.	Vacuum cleaners

Domain 7: Tool Skills and Component Skills

MM2.	Reaches for items
MM7.	Grasps items
M3.	Matches items to corresponding containers or locations
Im2.	Imitates motor movements with items

Getting Started with *Essential for Living*

To get started using *Essential for Living*, the following 7 steps are suggested:

- Step 1** -- Read chapters 1-4 of the Professional Practitioner's Handbook;
- Step 2** -- Select a child or an adult with moderate-to-severe disabilities and problem behavior or a limited skill repertoire, or both, and obtain a copy of the Assessment and Record of Progress [ARP] Manual or the Essential Assessment and Record of Progress [EARP] Manual;
- Step 3** -- Conduct an Assessment of Skill Deficits: Activities 1-4 as described on pages 28 and 29 and chapters 5 and 6 of the handbook;
- Step 4** -- Conduct an Assessment of Problem Behavior, including the supports these behaviors may require as described on pages 30-32 of the handbook;
- Step 5** -- Select 5-8 skills deficits and problem behaviors for inclusion in the learner's IEP, ISP, behavior plan, hab plan, or instructional plan, and begin instruction and behavior management using the Teaching Protocols in chapter 12 of the handbook;
- Step 6** -- Track learner progress using your own data sheets or self-graphing data recording forms from www.essentialforliving.com and periodically transfer data to the ARP or EARP Manual as described on pages 33-37 of the handbook; and,
- Step 7** -- As the learner acquires skills that have been assessed, or priorities change in the life of the learner, conduct another assessment (Steps 3 and 4) and identify new skills or problem behaviors.

The
ESSENTIAL
FOR
LIVING
Speaker Initiative

There are many thousands of children and adults
with moderate-to-severe disabilities,
and
No Effective Method of Speaking.

As a direct result, many of these individuals
exhibit problem behavior, which limits their
participation in community activities.

The goal of 'The Essential for Living Speaker Initiative'
is to provide a method of speaking for as many of
these children and adults as possible and to expand
their speaking repertoires to include requests for a
wide variety of preferred items and activities.

To accomplish this goal, we need to...

- 1- **Identify** these children and adults one at a time,
- 2- **Select** a method of speaking for each of them,
and
- 3- **Teach** each one of them to make requests
for their most preferred items and activities.

Essential for Living will help you accomplish these
goals and become part of this initiative.

For more information on helping
these children and adults become speakers...

www.essentialforliving.com