Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) Assessment Checklist

Each assessment check is included based on evidence that it will improve assessments for individuals with complex communication needs (CCN). Review and confirm each check.

What are the student's communication needs?

☐ What are the student's communication needs?

What does the student need to understand?

With whom does the student need to communicate?

Why does the student need to communicate?

About what does the student need to communicate?

When and where does the student need to communicate?

How does the student need to communicate?

☐ Which of the student's communication needs are unmet?

☐ Which of the student's communication needs are priorities for the student? Family? School?

What are the student's skills?

☐ What are the student's vision skills?

Visual field

Visual acuity

☐ What are the student's hearing skills?

☐ What are the student's motor skills?

Gestures and signs

Access to systems (direct selection and/or switch)

Seating and positioning

☐ What are the student's receptive language skills?

Understanding words, morphology, and sentence structure

☐ What are the student's expressive communication skills?

Turntaking

Natural speech and intelligibility

About what and how does the student communicate?

☐ What are the student's literacy skills?

Letter-sound correspondences

Decoding

Sight-word recognition

Reading comprehension

Spelling

Writing

☐ What are the student's symbol representation skills?

Types of symbols (Objects, gestures, signs, photographs, line drawings, print)

☐ What are the student's cognitive organization skills?

Display (Grids, visual scenes)

Symbol organization (Context, category, syntax, alphabet, other)

What are the partner and environmental supports and limitations?

☐ What are partner supports to communication?

Opportunities for communication

Knowledge of AAC services, systems, and/or instructional strategies

☐ What are partner limitations to communication?

Limited opportunities for communication

Limited knowledge of AAC services, systems, and/or instructional strategies

☐ What are environmental supports to communication?

Educational placement

Environmental access

☐ What are environmental limitations to communication?

Educational placement

Limited environmental access

Limited use (Student is unable to use the AAC system across environments)

Who is involved in the assessment?

☐ Student

☐ Family

☐ Professionals

Instructional assistant

Regular education teacher

Special education teacher

Assistive technology specialist

Occupational therapist

Physical therapist

Speech-language pathologist

Others

Figure 2.3. Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) Assessment Checklist. (From Birmingham Karnezos, J. & Light, J. [2016, August]). The Effect of a Checklist on School-Based Speech-Language Pathologists' Plans for Augmentative and Alternative Communication Assessment. Paper presented at the Biennial Conference of the International Society for Augmentative and Alternative Communication, Toronto, ON; reprinted by permission.