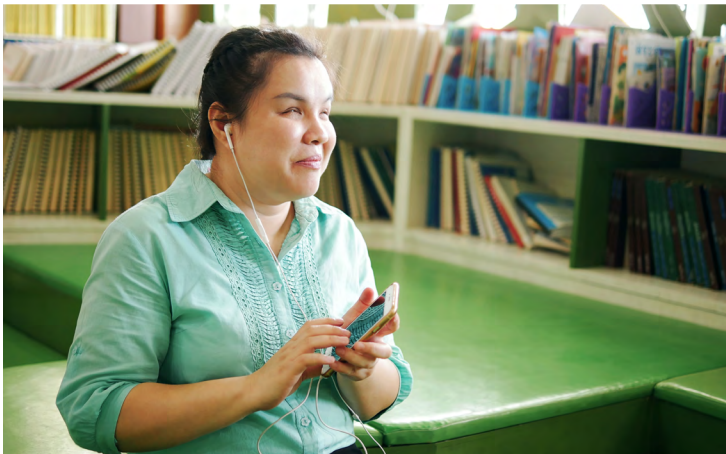


# HCBS

## COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE



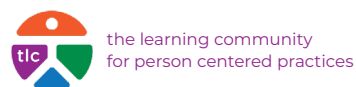
**SESSION TOPIC:** Upholding Dignity and Privacy:  
Respectful Communication

HCBS REQUIREMENT #3

## Acknowledgements

Thank you to all who share a commitment to building a community where everyone can thrive.

This HCBS Community of Practice is made possible by funding from the Department of Developmental Services and the collaboration of the following organizations.



Explore Community of Practice resources at [helensandersonassociates.com/hcbs-community-of-practice/](https://helensandersonassociates.com/hcbs-community-of-practice/)

# REFLECTION

Think of someone you know well; someone you feel confident in knowing how and what they are communicating.

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How did you come to discover what they are communicating?

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Identify one thing they do (action) to communicate something – what are they communicating?

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What do you do in response?

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Additional thoughts

# COMMUNICATION CHART

“Everyone who is dependent on others for support has an especially critical need to have his or her communication understood. – MICHAEL SMULL”

## What it does

The communication chart is a simple but powerful way to record how someone communicates with words and with behavior.

This tool helps us to focus on what someone is trying to communicate, whether they use words or not. It is also useful when the ways that people communicate with their behavior are clearer than the words that they use, or when what people say and what they mean are different.

## How to use it

As you start to build the communication chart, look for easy, simple, and clear expressions.

- How do you know if the person is happy, sad or angry?
- How do you know if the person likes or dislikes something?

It helps to start as soon as an opportunity presents itself and continue to update the chart as new insights are gained.

Make it available both to those who are new in the person's life, and, as communication changes or becomes more complex, those who have experiences and learning that should be added.

1. Start with what you see or hear the person saying or doing.
2. Notice what is happening in the environment.
3. Write what you think it means; what you think the person is trying to communicate.
4. Write what others should know or do in response to what was communicated.

## How it helps

It is easy to assume that someone doesn't have much to say if they rarely speak, but it isn't the case. Everyone communicates. This person-centered thinking tool helps us to find other ways of communicating well together

A communication chart ensures that people are understood. This is so important, especially for people who rely on others for support. Having the power to communicate and be understood is central to people having choice and control in their lives.

What am I communicating to you?			
At this time	When this happens	We think it means	We need to do this
What is going on around you when you respond this way.	Write down what others would see, hear or feel you do.	Write down why you are reacting the way you are.	What response do you want from others to help you through the situation.

# COMMUNICATION CHART

## Welcome back Shawna!

We met Shawna last quarter! Shawna is a cheerful and friendly woman who lights up the room with her smile and contagious laugh. She's an artist who loves creating jewelry, paintings, and more.

As you may remember, Shawna mainly communicates using American Sign Language, her tablet, and gestures. It's important to her that people respect her preferences and that she is in charge of her own life. When she feels ignored, misunderstood, or overwhelmed, she may express her frustration by yelling, crying, or leaving the situation.

To help Shawna live a life with dignity and respect, it is important that we fully understand what she is communicating, ensuring she is not doing something she doesn't want to due to us not understanding.

## Shawna's Communication Chart

What am I communicating to you?			
At this time	When this happens	We think it means	We need to do this
When talking to me	Moan loud repeatedly and I hold up my right hand and shake it	You are standing over me and it is scaring me, I'm telling you to stop	Sit down next to me
Your are asking me a question	Start yelling and shaking both of my hands in the air	I am getting overwhelmed and I don't want to have this conversation	Acknowledge that I am getting overwhelmed and ask if I would like to go outside for a while
You are asking me a question	I am pointing at my tablet or fanny pack	I need to use my tablet. I point to the answers or show you pictures of what I want.	Help me turn on my tablet or get my phone out of my fanny pack
Anytime	Scream and rush over to me	I am excited to see that person and what to say hi!	Give me a hug and say hello
Anytime	Start to stare and shake my head, holding up my right arm	I don't like what is happening around me	I want to leave, help me gather my things and go get a staff i like



Shawna's Communication Chart

What am I communicating to you?			
At this time	When this happens	We think it means	We need to do this
When talking to me	Moan loud repeatedly and I hold up my right hand and shake it	You are standing over me and it is scaring me, I'm telling you to stop	Sit down next to me
Your are asking me a question	Start yelling and shaking both of my hands in the air	I am getting overwhelmed and I don't want to have this conversation	Acknowledge that I am getting overwhelmed and ask if I would like to go outside for a while
You are asking me a question	I am pointing at my tablet or fanny pack	I need to use my tablet. I point to the answers or show you pictures of what I want.	Help me turn on my tablet or get my phone out of my fanny pack
Anytime	Scream and rush over to me	I am excited to see that person and what to say hi!	Give me a hug and say hello
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# COMMUNICATION CHART

What am I communicating to you?

At this time	When this happens	We think it means	We need to do this

# REFLECTION

**Take time to think about the benefits of the communication chart and what is realistic for you and the people you support.**

How can you utilize or implement the communication chart within your organization?

Identify one thing that may get in the way of you trying?

What will you do to overcome that barrier?

What support can this community of practice provide to you?



