**Handout 1: AAC Message Selection Examples**

Sample Activity Routine: “Morning Meeting”

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| **Messages Types/Examples** | **Possible Communication Use(s)** |
| **Names**   * Classmates’ names * Staff names * Reference to self/“me”) | * Take Attendance * Call on Peers to report about what happened at home * Choose a person to sit next to or select a favorite song for the meeting * Get another person’s attention * Respond to “Who has [Name of calendar activity] today?” |
| **Sequencing Vocabulary**   * Right now * Next/Later * Finished | * Respond to partners about the calendar activities for the day * Start/End conversation about activities * Report/Announce activities for the day |
| **Comments**   * Cool! * No way * I LOVE it | * Follow-up with peers’ responses * Comment in response to, “What do you think about it?” * Interject/Interrupt during the meeting! |
| **Actions**   * Go/Stop * Give/Get * Stand up/Sit down | * Lead group morning stretches or sensory routines (request actions) * Lead a turn-taking therapy ball, massager, bolster, or rocker activity |
| **Descriptors**   * Smooth/Rough * Loud/Soft * Big/Little | * “Quiz” peers in opposites (“I say up, you say…”) * Give directions during functional tasks * Describe preferred activities |
| **Social Phrases**   * What’s up? * Yo! * See ya * My/Your turn | * Start, continue, or end conversations * Get attention of a nearby person * Take turns |

**AAC Assessment is Dynamic:**

Communication messages (and the reasons for those messages) can change depending on the environment/context or partner. When considering messages to include in a student’s AAC system, ask yourself:

* ***What are the student’s “verbal” peers able to express within specific environments?***
* ***Are there opportunities where the student misses turns or opportunities to respond because he/she has no way to do so?***
* ***What kinds of messages would increase independence and initiation?***

**AAC assessment is ongoing:**

Once you have selected messages to include in a system, ask yourself:

* ***Is the message something the student is motivated to communicate (will the student be excited to initiate the message)?***
* ***Is the message understandable to the student’s peers?***
* ***Is the message appropriate for the student’s age/gender?***
* ***Does the message have the potential to be used frequently within social interactions?***
* ***Is the student using messages for a variety of reasons, not just requesting?***