

## Severe and Multiple Disabilities Constituent Committee Monthly Message

*The DCDD Board members prepare briefs about topics of interest for our members. As a DCDD member, you are receiving this brief on the topic of resources for professionals who work with students who have communication disorders and/or who are deaf or hard of hearing. We appreciate your continued membership with DCDD! Please feel free to discuss this article on DCDD [Linkedin](#) or [Twitter](#).*

This monthly message is the sixth in a series about the *Communication Bill of Rights*. The list of 15 communication rights and guidelines for professional practice can be found in this article:

Brady, N. C., Bruce, S., Goldman, A., Erickson, K., Mineo, B., Ogletree, B. T., Paul, D., Ronski, M., Sevcik, R., Siegel, E., Schoonover, J., Snell, M., Sylvester, L., & Wilkinson, K. (2016). Communication services and supports for individuals with severe disabilities: Guidance for assessment and intervention. *American Journal on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities*, 121(2), 121-138.

In this month's article, we will focus on the sixth communication right:

### **The right to make comments and share opinions**

*How we might support individuals with severe disabilities to make comments and share opinions:*

- *Teach and provide vocabulary associated with making comments, including comments about the characteristics of objects, activities, people, and environments.*
  - It's soft.
  - This is messy.
  - I can't believe how cold it is today.
  - It's too noisy in here. I don't like it.
  - I just love this song!
- *Identify how the individual already expresses opinions and in what form(s) of communication.*
  - Expresses dislike by pushing unwanted items away

- Breaks into huge smile during water play

-Puts head down when bored with activity.

-Expresses enthusiasm for an activity by moving hand quickly up and down.

- *Create a likes/dislikes map to support sensitivity to opinions.*
- *Create opportunities for individuals to comment and to express opinion.*
- *Create a communication profile or dictionary that defines how the individual comments and expresses opinions to support the comprehension of communication partners.*
- *Be an advocate-everyone has the right to express opinions.*

I'm sure you have many additional ideas on this topic. Do you have a favorite resource on teaching choice-making?

Please join us on Twitter or Linked In to share your ideas about this fourth communication right.

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