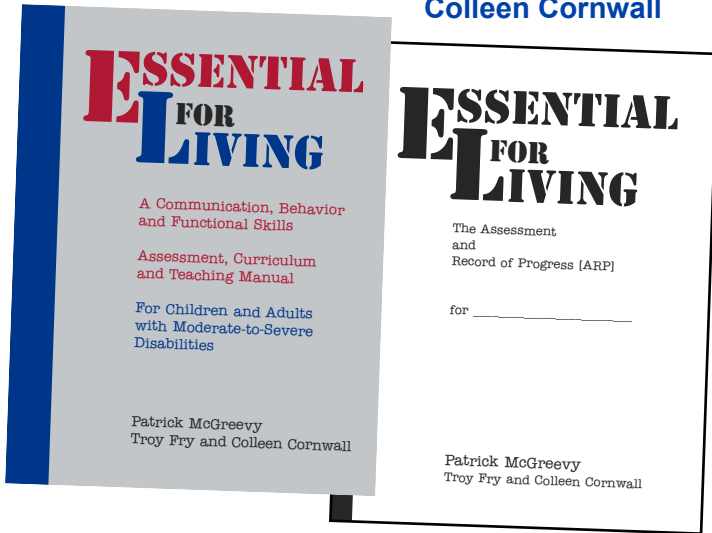


ESSENTIAL FOR LIVING

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A Communication, Behavior, and Functional Skills Curriculum, Assessment, and Professional Practitioner's Handbook

for Children and Adults
with Moderate-to-Severe Disabilities

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Essential for Living: An Introduction

'Essential for Living was designed for' children and adults of all ages with moderate-to-severe disabilities and limited skill repertoires, and especially

- ➡ children who are struggling to become vocal,
- ➡ non-verbal children or adults who have no effective method of speaking,
- ➡ children or adults with severe forms of disruptive, aggressive, or self-injurious behavior,
- ➡ children who are no longer making progress on a developmental curriculum, such as the VB-MAPP or the Early Start Denver Model, and who need a curriculum that includes more functional skills,
- ➡ 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, QDDPs, and support coordinators

- ➡ select functional skills for instruction and problem behaviors for management, and include these selections in IEPs and ISPs
- ➡ 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,
- ➡ 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, and provide reasonable and fair measures of teacher performance based on that progress,
- ➡ document specific supports that learners currently require, and
- ➡ 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 with' other curriculums, such as,

The VB-MAPP

The ABLLS or The ABLLS-R

A Work in Progress

The ACE Curriculum

The MOVE Curriculum

PECS

The Lovaas Curriculum

The Early Start Denver Model

The Murdoch Center Program Library

The Components and Skill Domains of Essential for Living

The Essential for Living Quick Assessment	
Methods of Speaking: Facilitating and Teaching Spoken-word Communication Selecting, Confirming, and Maintaining an Alternative Method of Speaking	
<i>Essential for Living: The Curriculum and Assessment</i>	
How Children and Adults Interact with the World Around Them	The Domains of <i>Essential for Living</i>
Speaking and Listening	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Requests and Related Listener Responses 2 Listener Responses, Names, and Descriptions 3 Answers to Questions and Conversations
Doing	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4 Daily Living and Related Skills 5 Functional Academic Skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responding to Text as a Listener and Reading • Schedules, Lists, and Time • Math Skills • Writing or Typing Skills
Tolerating	6 Tolerating Skills and Eggshells
Tool Movements	7 Tool Skills and Component Skills
Inappropriate Behavior	Problem Behavior
Teaching Protocols	

The Essential for Living Quick Assessment

Essential for Living (EFL) begins with The Quick Assessment, which introduces the new user to the instrument. It includes an interview with an individual who knows the learner well. Based on that person's responses to specific questions, EFL directs the user to begin teaching specific skills or to use specific sections of the instrument. As users become familiar with EFL, they will begin to use the Quick Assessment less often, and will prefer to start with specific Skill Domains and conduct an initial assessment by directly observing the learner.

Methods of Speaking

Essential for Living, unlike any other curriculum or assessment instrument, includes a chapter on Methods of Speaking. In this chapter, users are provided with procedures for increasing the number of spoken-word utterances and for selecting an alternative method of speaking for non-verbal learners or learners with a limited repertoire of spoken words. EFL suggests that learners with articulation problems always be referred to a speech-language pathologist.

Methods of Speaking (continued)

In the first section of this chapter, users are taught to align each learner with one of six Vocal Profiles based on that learner's repertoire of spoken words, spoken-word repetitions, and sounds:

Vocal Profile 1 -- Typical Spoken-word Interactions and Controlled Spoken-word Repetitions

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

Vocal Profile 3 -- Occasional Words and Phrases

Vocal Profile 4 -- Uncontrolled and Controlled Repetitions that are Not Understandable

Vocal Profile 5 -- Occasional Words that are Not Understandable

Vocal Profile 6 -- Noises, a Few Sounds, and Syllables

When learners are aligned with Vocal Profile 1, their method of speaking is obviously *saying words* and no alternative method of speaking is required.

When learners are aligned with any of the remaining Vocal Profiles, teaching procedures for that profile designed to improve the number of spoken-word utterances, are recommended. Users are also advised whether or not to select and teach an alternative method of speaking, and how to allocate resources between trying to improve the number of spoken-word utterances and teaching an alternative method of speaking.

For learners aligned with Vocal Profiles 3, 4, 5, or 6, users are shown how to select an alternative method of speaking. This systematic selection process is based on matching a learner's sensory, skill, and behavioral repertoires with those repertoires that are likely to occur when specific, alternative methods of speaking are effective. This matching process is accomplished with a diagram of these repertoires for each of 46 alternative methods of speaking and a mylar included in the Professional Practitioner's Handbook which depicts the learner's repertoires. Users are taught to set aside several methods with the greatest number of 'matches' and then, from these methods, select the one that retains the greatest number of advantages of *saying words*, with respect to both the learner and the learner's audience. In other words, users are taught to select a method that is best suited to each learner and that permits each learner to function as much like an individual aligned with Profile 1 as possible.

Users are then taught to determine if the selected, alternative method of speaking is effective and to confirm this method as the learner's primary method of speaking. Users are also taught to maintain this method over time, and to select and teach back-up and secondary methods of speaking when these are appropriate.

The Domains of Essential for Living

Essential for Living includes seven skill domains:

- 1** Requests and Related Listener Responses
- 2** Listener Responses, Names, and Descriptions,
- 3** Answers to Questions and Conversations,
- 4** Daily Living and Related (Vocational and Leisure) Skills,
- 5** Functional Academic Skills,
 - Responding to Text as a Listener and Reading
 - Schedules, Lists, and Time
 - Math Skills
 - Writing or Typing Skills
- 6** Tolerating Skills and Eggshells, and
- 7** Tool Skills and Component Skills.

Skills in each domain are sequenced from most functional to least functional or most difficult and grouped into these categories:

Must-have Skills,
Should-have Skills,
Good-to-have Skills, and
Nice-to-have Skills.

Each skill domain includes two or more of these categories.

Unlike most other curriculums, Essential for Living also includes a domain on Problem Behavior, which permits users to track changes in:

the intensity and the frequency of occurrence,
the amount of psychoactive medication,
the extent of mechanical restraints and protective equipment,
the use of crisis stabilization procedures, and
the occurrence of self-restraint.

The Skills of Essential for Living

Many hundreds of skills are included in the seven skill domains of Essential for Living. Domains 1, 2, 4, & 6 include Must-have Skills, which, grouped together across skill domains, are referred to as The Essential Eight.

The Must-have Skills In Domains 1, 2, 4, and 6: The Essential Eight

Skill Domain	Must-have Skills	The Essential Eight
1	R7. Makes requests for highly preferred snack foods, drinks, non-food items, or activities... and 13 other skills that include making requests	One. MAKING REQUESTS for Access to Certain Highly Preferred Items and Activities, and for the Removal of Certain Non-preferred Items and Activities
	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 & 16. 'Accepts no' after making requests...	Five. ACCEPTING 'NO'
2	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
4	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
6	T-BH15. Tolerates touch, physical guidance, or prompts... and 70 other skills that include tolerating specific situations	Eight. TOLERATING SITUATIONS Related to Health and Safety

The Essential Eight, which are absolutely necessary for a happy, fulfilling, and productive life, as a child or an adult, **are the central focus of Essential for Living**. In the absence of The Essential Eight, children and adults are less likely to learn other functional skills, more likely to exhibit forms of problem behavior, less likely to have access to preferred items and activities, and less likely to interact with other members of their community. *Assessment and teaching should almost always begin with these skills.*

Some of the Remaining Skills of Essential for Living

In addition to the must-have skills, there are hundreds of 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 below:

Requests and Related Listener Responses

- 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
- R51. Makes a request for feedback, approval, or confirmation

Listener Responses, Names, and Descriptions

- LR12. Completes five activities of dressing and personal hygiene when directed to do so
- LR14. 'Cleans up' after making a mess when directed to do so
- LRND1.1 Breakfast -- Retrieves a spoon
 Relocates a spoon (to the dishwasher)
 Names a spoon

Answers to Questions and Conversations

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

Daily Living and Related (Leisure and Vocational) Skills

- DLS-EDF18. Wipes mouth and hands with a napkin
- DLS-Slp5. Remains in own bed throughout the night
- DLS-MT8. Walks with a gait trainer
- DLS-Toil6. Urinates and defecates in the toilet
- DLS-BPH1. Washes hands
- DLS-BPH19. Applies deodorant
- DLS-D32. Fastens shoes with velcro
- DLS-SIT12. Completes two-response tasks while working alone
- DLS-V3. Participates in supported employment

Some of the Remaining Skills of Essential for Living (continued)

Daily Living and Related (Leisure and Vocational) Skills

- DLS-V36. Works for 20 minutes with one or two pauses of less than one minute
- DLS-RDA5. Cleans own room
- DLS-LAC4. Goes bowling
- DLS-C2. Washes and dries dishes

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', and 'Wet Floor')
- 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
- SLT12. Participates in events and activities slated to occur at specific times later that same day using a clock or watch

Math Skills

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

Writing or Typing Skills

- WT2. Writes, types, or Braille writes their first and last name when asked to do so
- WT7. Writes, types, or Braille writes words that often appear on shopping lists

Tolerating Skills and Eggshells

- T-C3. Undershirts
- T-BPH9. A shower at home
- T-SIT3. School or therapy center environments
- T-BHI7. The word "no" or other indications of disapproval or incorrect responding
- T-BDA5. Not being first or first in line

Some of the Remaining Skills of Essential for Living (continued)

Tool Skills and Component Skills

MM2.	Reaches for items
MM7.	Grasps items
M3.	Matches items to corresponding containers or locations
M8.	Matches miniature items or iconic symbols to corresponding activities
Im2.	Imitates motor movements with items

Tracking Learner Progress

In most curricula, learner performance is measured using two basic criteria:

none -- the learner does not perform any part of the skill

acquired -- the learner demonstrates the skill and performs it consistently.

Some curricula add a third criterion:

prompted -- the learner requires prompts.

Other curricula use from 2-4 criteria or include these criteria in the description of some skills;

whether or not prompts are required,

one or more circumstances in which the skill is performed,

a minimum number of daily occurrences, or

the number of examples of the skill that are performed.

With these curricula, skill tracking is only sensitive to large increments of learner progress.

As shown on page 10, each skill in Essential for Living includes performance criteria that indicate the extent to which the learner exhibits problem behavior or resists prompts, the extent to which prompts are required, the extent to which generalization has occurred, and whether the skill continues to occur without instruction. And, these criteria are not included in the skill descriptions. As a result, Essential for Living permits users to measure and document small increments of learner progress, referred to as *degrees of independence*. In the example on page 10, yellow indicates learner performance during the initial assessment of each skill and green and red indicate changes in performance, that is, progress, during the first and second years of instruction. With respect to the three skills assessed and taught, the learner achieved fourteen degrees of progress in the first year and three additional degrees in the second. As also shown on page 10, learner progress across skills with respect to 'degrees of independence' can be tracked using a monthly cumulative graph.

Progress across skills can also be tracked with respect to '*skills performed without prompts or skills in which generalization has been demonstrated*' using the First Things First Diagram in EFL or an additional monthly cumulative graph.

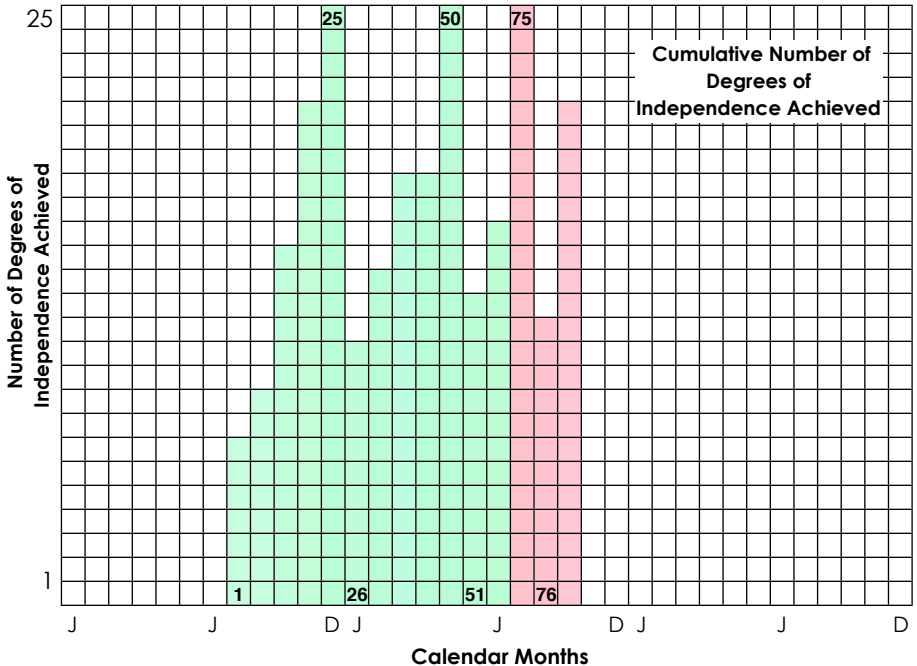
As shown on page 11, Essential for Living also permits users to track learner progress with respect to problem behavior, and the supports with respect to that behavior, which may be required.

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

1 ice cream	IA	IM	-SA	-DC	-RP	FP	PP	MP	Ind	2S	2P	<M	NI	Det
2 crackers	IA	IM	-SA	-DC	-RP	FP	PP	MP	Ind	2S	2P	<M	NI	Det
3 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]



Problem Behavior

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 and R9

<p>Type of Problem Behavior:</p> <p>SIB: Self-injurious Agg: Aggressive Des: Destructive Dis: Disruptive Rep: Repetitive</p>	<p>Psychoactive Medications:</p> <p>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:</p> <p>Sev: Severe Mod: Moderate Mild: Mild</p>	

<p>Mechanical Restraints:</p> <p>MRA- continuous MRC- contingent MR>2 have been increased twice MR>1 have been increased once MR at the time of the initial assessment MR<1 have been partially faded once MR<2 have been partially faded twice MR<3 have been partially faded 3 times -MR are not required</p>	<p>Protective Equipment:</p> <p>PEA- continuous PEC- contingent PE>2 has been increased twice PE>1 has been increased once PE at the time of the initial assessment PE<1 has been partially faded once PE<2 has been partially faded twice PE<3 has been partially faded 3 times -PE is not required</p>
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<p>Crisis Stabilization Procedures:</p> <p>CS>5hW are used more than 5 hrs./week CS2-5hW are used 2-5 hrs./week CS1-2hW are used 1-2 hrs./week CS30m-1hW are used 30 mins. -- 1 hr./week CS<30mW are used < 30 mins./week -CS are not required</p>	<p>Self-restraints:</p> <p>SR>2 have been increased twice SR>1 have been increased once SR at the time of the initial assessment SR<1 have been partially faded once SR<2 have been partially faded twice SR<3 have been partially faded 3 times -SR self-restraints are not occurring</p>
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Frequency: **>100D** -- more than 100 instances (or episodes)/day **51-100D** -- 51-100/day
21-50D -- 21-50/day **11-20D** -- 11-20/day **1-10D** -- 1-10/day **<1D** -- < once/day
<1W -- < once per week **<1M** -- < once per month **<1Y** -- has not occurred for one year

The



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.behaviorchange.com