# Independence Continuum

# indigo. Formerly Independent Living Centre WA

This document is designed to establish insight into current skills & potential target skills. It is not a standardised assessment and is best completed in consultation with a range of communication partners & the individual wherever possible. This document DOES NOT and SHOULD NOT be used to describe someone's potential.

Individuals may demonstrate skills in more than one level and are not required to demonstrate mastery of one level before exploring skills in other levels.

Individual's details		People he	ping to complete this form
Name:		Name:	
Age:		Name:	

### Expressive communication strategies (being used by the individual)

□ Body movements & gestures	Hands (pointing, touching)	<ul> <li>Text</li> <li>(writing, typing, letter selection)</li> </ul>					
□ Facial expressions	<ul> <li>Manual signs</li> <li>(Auslan, Key Word Sign)</li> </ul>	□ Non-Electronic AAC: <i>Type:</i>					
Eves	Real objects	Electronic AAC:					
		Туре:					
□ Voice □ Speech	□ Pictures	□ Something else:					
	(photos, PCS, SymbolStix)	Details:					
Receptive communicatio	Receptive communication strategies (being modelled by others)						

Body movements & gestures	🗌 Hands	🗆 Text	
🗆 Body movements & gestures	(pointing, touching)	(writing, typing, letter selection)	
□ Facial expressions	Manual signs	□ Non-Electronic AAC:	
	(Auslan, Key Word Sign)	Туре:	
□ Eves	□ Real objects	🗆 Electronic AAC:	
		Туре:	
□ Voice □ Speech	Pictures	□ Something else:	
	(photos, PCS, SymbolStix)	Details:	

### Summary

Best description of current skills	Emergent	Emergent to contextual	Context dependent	Contextual to independent	Independent
Decision making					
Understanding					
Expressive					
Strategic					
Operational					
Social					
Literacy					

Autonomy in Decision Making

(AiDEM)

This resource was produced with funding received from the Non-Government Centre Support for Non-School (NGCS) Organisations of Western Australia (2020)

# Independence Continuum



Formerly Independent Living Centre WA

### Skill area: Decision making

2	Date:		
Emergent (Stage 1) – Expressing preferences	Not Observed 0	Developing 0.5	Established 1
It helps to have a familiar person to interpret expressive behaviours successfully			
Expresses:			
A person/ action/ thing is liked			
A person/ action/ thing is not liked			
An opinion about a person/ action /thing			
Receptive (Stage 2) – Affirm or deny	Not Observed	Developing	/4 Established
Confirms how actions are interpreted (e.g., a smile to say "you guessed it")			
Indicates an interpretation was incorrect (e.g., a frown to say "that's not what I meant")			
Indicates when something is not understood			
Adds conditions to a choice (e.g., "yes, but…")			
Asks for something not offered (e.g., something different)			
			/5
Early expressive (Stage 3) – Elaborate & describe	Not Observed	Developing	Established
Expands on preferences – express the why			
(e.g., "Don't like. Too noisy")			
			/1
Early conventional (Stage 4) – Rank & compare	Not Observed	Developing	Established
Compares or ranks choices/options			
An environment exists where opinions are expected			
			/2
Conventional (Stage 5) – Expand Authority	Not Observed	Developing	Established
It is known what decisions are being made by & for the individual			
It is known what decisions are important to the individual			
An agreement is in place as to who has the final say in which decision	s 🗆		
			/3

Adapted from: Sheldon, E. (2019)

 Autonomy in Decision
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 Making
 Decision

(AiDEM)



Formerly Independent Living Centre WA

### Skill area: Understanding (receptive language)

Date:			
Emergent skills	Not Observed 0	Developing 0.5	Established 1
Starting to show understanding that symbols represent ideas			
Pictures & picture symbols are used by others to help understanding & teach expression			
Shows anticipation of steps in familiar routines & activities			
Pays attention to an object or activity with partner			
			/4
Emergent to contextual skills	Not Observed	Developing	Established
Responds to common natural gestures			
(e.g., come here, go away, hi)			
Shows understanding of the use of common objects			
Pictures seem to help improve understanding			
Starting to follow simple directions in familiar routines & activities			
Shows understanding of symbols for basic, common, or concrete items			
			/5
Context dependent skills	Not Observed	Developing	Established
Shows understanding of symbols for common objects & actions (e.g., run, paint, eat), people, or situations			
Shows understanding of more abstract concepts (e.g., think, big, hot, few)			
Follows simple instructions in both familiar & unfamiliar routines			
Pays attention in general conversations			
			/4
Contextual to independent skills	Not Observed	Developing	Established
Shows understanding of general conversations.			
Follows more complex or unusual instructions			
Knows what accommodations are needed to support understanding			
			/3
Independent skills	Not Observed	Developing	Established
	1	1	
Advocates for accommodations to support understanding			

Adapted from: Janice Light & David McNaughton (2014)

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### Skill area: Expressive language

Date:			
Emergent skills	Not Observed 0	Developing 0.5	Established 1
Uses facial expression, body language, gestures, &/or behaviour (usually understood only by very familiar people)			
Indicates acceptance or rejection (e.g., smile or turning away)			
Tries to communicate in familiar & motivating activities			
Is helped by others to communicate successfully (e.g., narrowing choices, interpreting body language)			
			/4
Emergent to contextual skills	Not Observed	Developing	Established
Uses clear & simple symbols during motivating situations & activities			
Uses one symbol at a time			
Directs use of gestures, body language, facial expression, or behaviour at a communication partner (reliability varies from day to day or activity to activity)			
			/3
Context dependent skills	Not Observed	Developing	Established
Uses a combination of methods to express messages (e.g., gestures/pointing, picture symbols, speech/voice, AAC device).			
Beginning to comment &/or ask questions			
Communicates best in routines, about familiar topics, & with a familiar partner			
Beginning to combine two or more symbols to create longer messages (e.g., want+drink; I+like; it+yuck)			
Beginning to combine two or more strategies (e.g., point+verbal word; sign+picture symbol)			
			/5
Contextual to independent skills	Not Observed	Developing	Established
Communicates about a range of topics with both familiar & unfamiliar partners			
Consistently combines 2 or more symbols to create longer, more complex &/or an increased variety of messages for different reasons (e.g., comments, questions, or sharing information)			
Uses a wide variety of vocabulary or communication tools			
			/3
Independent skills	Not Observed	Developing	Established
Combines single words, spelling, & phrases to communicate about different subjects like peers			
Uses words/messages available to describe unavailable words			
Links sentences using conjunctions (e.g., and, because, if, that, but)			
			/3

#### Adapted from: Janice Light & David McNaughton (2014)

Autonomy in Decision Making (AiDEM) This resource was produced with funding received from the Non-Government Centre Support for Non-School (NGCS) Organisations of Western Australia (2020)

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### Skill area: Strategic competence

Date:				
Emergent skills	Not Observed 0	Developing 0.5	Established 1	
Shows understanding that communication can change the environment				
Shows that a message was not successfully understood				
(e.g., shows displeasure or frustration)				
			/2	
Emergent to contextual skills	Not Observed	Developing	Established	
Gets partner's attention before communicating a message				
Uses simple repair strategy (repeating message) if needed				
(e.g., if misunderstood, ignored, or the system did not speak/activate)				
Is helped by others identifying possible communication methods				
			/3	
Context dependent skills	Not Observed	Developing	Established	
Uses an introduction strategy with unfamiliar communication partners with				
some help				
(e.g., something to show they use a device to help communicate)				
Is engaged during conversations to monitor attention & understanding				
Uses more repair strategies				
(e.g., repeat, rephrase, additional key word, first letter clue)				
Uses simple strategies to increase speed of communication				
(e.g., key words, pre-stored)				
Persists in repeating message when intended message is misunderstood or				
system did not activate/speak			/5	
Contextual to independent skills	Not Observed	Developing	Established	
Independently uses an introduction with unfamiliar partners				
(e.g., descriptive instructions on how to best communicate with them)				
Communicates plan to contribute to a conversation				
(e.g., I have a question; I want to tell you about)				
Recognises message was not understood & alerts the communication partner				
(e.g., wrong, try again; let me tell you another way)				
Proactively manages the interaction				
(e.g., interjects with "wait", "hang on", or "yeah")				
Signals a tonic change or end with appropriate message				
Signals a topic change or end with appropriate message				
			/5	
Independent skills	Not Observed	Developing	,	
Independent skills	Not Observed	Developing	,	
Independent skills Independently uses several strategies to prevent or repair communication breakdown Plans ahead to contribute effectively to a conversation			Established	
Independent skills Independently uses several strategies to prevent or repair communication breakdown Plans ahead to contribute effectively to a conversation (e.g., compose & store messages)			Established	
Independent skills Independently uses several strategies to prevent or repair communication breakdown Plans ahead to contribute effectively to a conversation (e.g., compose & store messages) Selects a communication mode appropriate to situation & listener			Established	
Independent skills Independently uses several strategies to prevent or repair communication breakdown Plans ahead to contribute effectively to a conversation (e.g., compose & store messages) Selects a communication mode appropriate to situation & listener Creatively uses system features to communicate effectively & efficiently			Established	
Independent skills Independently uses several strategies to prevent or repair communication breakdown Plans ahead to contribute effectively to a conversation (e.g., compose & store messages) Selects a communication mode appropriate to situation & listener			Established	

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### Skill area: Operational competence (specific to aided AAC use)

Immegent skills       0       0.5       1         Attends to AAC system	Date:			
[e.g., by looking at it, quieting to listen, or moving towards it)	Emergent skills			Established 1
(e.g., by looking at it, quieting to listen, or moving towards it)	Attends to AAC system			
(not always for obvious communication reasons)       //         Emergent to contextual skills       Not Observed       Developing         Transports AAC system in familiar activities	(e.g., by looking at it, quieting to listen, or moving towards it)			
Inter always for obvious communication reasons)       /2         Emergent to contextual skills       Not Observed       Developing         Establisher	Explores the device			
Emergent to contextual skills         Not Observed         Developing         Established           Transports AAC system in familiar activities	(not always for obvious communication reasons)			
Transports AAC system in familiar activities Positions AAC system for use or indicates the positioning needs to change Uses basic navigation (e.g., back/home button, swipe, turn page) Recognises if AAC system needs adjustment (e.g., volume, not working) Turns system on/off when appropriate (or asks for other to do) Turns system on/off when appropriate (or asks for other to do) Turns system on/off when appropriate to environment Adjusts volume appropriate to environment Charges device (or asks others to do) Clears & deletes messages independently Helps to add words by selecting symbols or choosing from suggested message Clears & deletes message independently Participates in programming by identifying additional topics or vocab Participates to logical page for new or unusual activities/topics/partners Navigates to oligical page for new or unusual activities/topics/partners Navigates to logical page for new or unusual activities/topics/partners (e.g., phrases, keyboard, visual scenes, photos) Kort Observed Combines different message types or tools to communicate (e.g., phrases, keyboard, photos) Case additional features (e.g., prases, represented actives (e.g., phrases, keyboard, photos)	Emergent to contextual skills	Not Observed	Developing	
Positions AAC system for use or indicates the positioning needs to change		_		
Uses basic navigation				
(e.g., back/home button, swipe, turn page)				
Recognises if AAC system needs adjustment         (e.g., volume, not working)         Turns system on/off when appropriate (or asks for other to do)         ()         ()         ()				
(e.g., volume, not working)				
Turns system on/off when appropriate (or asks for other to do)       Image: Context dependent skills       /5         Context dependent skills       Not Observed       Developing       Establisher         Asks for help if equipment needs adjustment       Image: Context dependent skills       Image: Context dependent skills       Image: Context dependent skills         Adjusts volume appropriate to environment       Image: Context dependent skills       Image: Context dependent skills       Image: Context dependent skills         Adjusts screen/position for best visibility & access (or asks other to do)       Image: Context dependent skills       Image: Context dependent skills       Image: Context dependent skills         Navigates to a logical page during familiar routines       Image: Context dependent skills       Image: Context depe				
Context dependent skills       Not Observed       Developing       Established         Asks for help if equipment needs adjustment       Image: Context dependent skills       Image: Context dependent skill				
Context dependent skills         Not Observed         Developing         Establisher           Asks for help if equipment needs adjustment				
Asks for help if equipment needs adjustment	Context dependent skills	Not Observed	Developing	Established
Adjusts volume appropriate to environment				
Charges device (or asks others to do)				
Adjusts screen/position for best visibility & access (or asks other to do)				
Navigates to a logical page during familiar routines				
Clears & deletes messages independently				
Helps to add words by selecting symbols or choosing from suggested message choices				
Transports AAC system from one activity to another or asks others to	Helps to add words by selecting symbols or choosing from suggested message		_	
Contextual to independent skills       Not Observed       Developing       Established         Cleans device or asks others to do independently				
Cleans device or asks others to do independently				
Participates in programming by identifying additional topics or vocab       Image: Constraint of the state o	Contextual to independent skills	Not Observed	Developing	Established
Participates in programming by selecting appropriate buttons for editing	Cleans device or asks others to do independently			
Adjusts volume appropriate to environment	Participates in programming by identifying additional topics or vocab			
Adjusts volume appropriate to environment	Participates in programming by selecting appropriate buttons for editing			
Navigates to logical page for new or unusual activities/topics/partners       Image: Comparison of the stabilis of the stabilished of the stabil	Adjusts volume appropriate to environment			
Navigates to different message tools (e.g., phrases, keyboard, visual scenes, photos)       Image: Combines different message types or tools to communicate (e.g., phrases, keyboard, photos)       Image: Combines different message types or tools to communicate (e.g., phrases, keyboard, photos)       Image: Combines different message types or tools to communicate (e.g., upgrades, troubleshooting, starts repair procedures)       Image: Combines different message types or tools to communicate (e.g., upgrades, troubleshooting, starts repair procedures)       Image: Combines different message types or tools to communicate (e.g., upgrades, troubleshooting, starts repair procedures)       Image: Combines different message types or tools to communicate (e.g., upgrades, troubleshooting, starts repair procedures)       Image: Combines different message types or tools to communicate (e.g., upgrades, troubleshooting, starts repair procedures)       Image: Combines different message types or tools to communicate       Image: Combines different message types or tools to communicate       Image: Combines different message types or tools to communicate       Image: Combines different message types or tools to communicate       Image: Combines different message types or tools to communicate       Image: Combines different message types or tools to communicate       Image: Combines different message types or tools to communicate       Image: Combines different message types or tools to communicate       Image: Combines different message types or tools to communicate       Image: Combines different message types or tools to communicate       Image: Combines different message types or tools to communicate       Image: Combines different message types or tools				
(e.g., phrases, keyboard, visual scenes, photos)Image: Construct of the stability of the stabilit				
Independent skillsNot ObservedDevelopingEstablishedCombines different message types or tools to communicate (e.g., phrases, keyboard, photos)				
Combines different message types or tools to communicate (e.g., phrases, keyboard, photos)       Image: Communicate (e.g., phrases, keyboard, photos)         Arranges equipment maintenance (e.g., upgrades, troubleshooting, starts repair procedures)       Image: Communicate (e.g., upgrades, troubleshooting, starts repair procedures)         Programs system independently       Image: Communicate (e.g., remote controls, text messaging, social media, computer control)       Image: Communicate (e.g., remote controls, text messaging, social media, computer control)         Uses additional software features       Image: Communicate (e.g., remote controls, text messaging, social media, computer control)       Image: Communicate (e.g., remote controls, text messaging, social media, computer control)				/6
Combines different message types or tools to communicate (e.g., phrases, keyboard, photos)Image of the second	Independent skills	Not Observed	Developing	Established
(e.g., phrases, keyboard, photos)       Arranges equipment maintenance       Image: Constraint of the second se	Combines different message types or tools to communicate		_	
(e.g., upgrades, troubleshooting, starts repair procedures)       Image: Comparison of the starts repair procedures         Programs system independently       Image: Comparison of the starts repair procedures       Image: Comparison of the starts repair procedures         Accesses additional features       Image: Comparison of the starts repair procedures       Image: Comparison of the starts repair procedures       Image: Comparison of the starts repair procedures         Accesses additional features       Image: Comparison of the starts repair procedures	(e.g., phrases, keyboard, photos)			
(e.g., upgrades, troubleshooting, starts repair procedures)       Image: Comparison of the starts repair procedures)         Programs system independently       Image: Comparison of the starts repair procedures)         Accesses additional features       Image: Comparison of the starts repair procedures)         (e.g., remote controls, text messaging, social media, computer control)       Image: Comparison of the starts repair procedures)         Uses additional software features       Image: Comparison of the starts repair procedures)	Arranges equipment maintenance			
Accesses additional features (e.g., remote controls, text messaging, social media, computer control) Uses additional software features	(e.g., upgrades, troubleshooting, starts repair procedures)			
(e.g., remote controls, text messaging, social media, computer control)       Image: Control software features         Uses additional software features       Image: Control software features	Programs system independently			
(e.g., remote controls, text messaging, social media, computer control) Uses additional software features	Accesses additional features			
(e.g., word prediction, pronunciation exceptions, & editing)	Uses additional software features			
/5	(e.g., word prediction, pronunciation exceptions, & editing)			

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### Skill area: Social

Do	ite:		
Emergent skills	Not Observed 0	Developing 0.5	Established 1
Reacts to familiar people &/or motivating activities			
Takes turns in familiar & motivating routines (e.g., "high five" or when someone spreads arms for a hug)			
May respond to close physical interaction by looking, smiling, or reaching			
			/3
Emergent to contextual skills	Not Observed	Developing	Established
Shows clear preference for certain objects, activities, &/or people			
May be starting to show some interest in social interactions, especially in specific situations			
Starting to use symbols to interact for social reasons			
Helped by others to maintain an appropriate distance during interactions			
			/4
Context dependent skills	Not Observed	Developing	Established
Starts conversations & social interactions with familiar communication partners			
Benefits from help to take additional turns in conversation			
Answers questions in familiar situations with familiar communication partners			
Asks questions of others in familiar situations			
Maintains an appropriate distance during interactions			
			/5
Contextual to independent skills	Not Observed	Developing	Established
Uses socially appropriate comments/questions to start conversation with familiar communication partners			
Answers routine questions with a variety of communication partners			
Appropriately uses comments/questions to start conversations with familiar communication partners			
Uses appropriate strategies to change topic or end a conversation			
Participates in clubs/groups related to interests			
Independently manages conversations with unfamiliar people in familiar situations or situations of interest			
			/6
Independent skills	Not Observed	Developing	Established
Maintains relationships beyond family and paid support			
Independently manages conversations with unfamiliar people			
			/2

\*Appropriateness of behaviour will always depend on the people and situation

Making

(AiDEM)

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# Independence Continuum

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### Skill area: Literacy

Da	ıte:		
Emergent skills	Not Observed 0	Developing 0.5	Established 1
Plays with books			
Is attracted to pictures in books			
May be using a pencil to draw			
May be scribbling with some letter like shapes recognisable			
, , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , ,			/4
Emergent to contextual skills	Not Observed	Developing	Established
Producing letter strings (not words)			
Grouping letter strings (unintelligible words)			
Shows an interest in shared reading			
Is starting to engage with books independently			
Able to identify own name			
Able to identify commonly seen words			
			/6
Context dependent skills	Not Observed	Developing	Established
May group letters & start to produce one or two real words			
Literacy skills include:			
<ul> <li>Identifying/recognising letters of the alphabet</li> </ul>			
Connecting some letters with corresponding sounds			
Understanding word boundaries			
Recognising high frequency sight words			
Reading & writing name			
Beginning to spell words (unconventional spelling sometimes)			
			/7
Contextual to independent skills	Not Observed	Developing	Established
Literacy skills include:			
<ul> <li>Increased awareness of link between letters &amp; sounds</li> </ul>			
Uses conventional spelling of simple words.			
Adding word endings as appropriate			
(e.g., past tense '-ed', plural '-s', or '-ing'),			
• Understanding the connection between spoken words & print.			
Uses word prediction			
Makes choices about preferred writing strategy			
Helped by using screen reader technology			
			/7
Independent skills	Not Observed	Developing	Established
Incorporates spelling to express uncommon words / words not in			
communication system			
Uses spelling as primary communication method			
Advocates access to preferred writing strategy			
Advocates access to required reading accommodations			
			/4

Adapted from: Sturm J., Cali K., Nelson N., Staskowski M. (2012)

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Phone: 08 9381 0600 | Web: www.indigosolutions.org.au | Email: help@indigosolution.org.au

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