

## Restorative Practices Capacity Assessment and Accommodations Guide



Use this form to identify and make accommodations for differences in the "key capacities" of participants that may arise from disability, developmental delays, or trauma and thus impact the effectiveness of a standard restorative process.

**STRATEGY ONE:** Identify from records any known diagnoses, history of trauma, or IEP/504 plan that predictably affect the "key capacities" of participant(s), and indicate those on the chart, along with any accommodations they may recommend.

**STRATEGY TWO:** Provide participant(s) an opportunity to self-identify differences and accommodations around "key capacities."

**STRATEGY THREE:** Note significant differences in "key capacities" through observation of the participant(s) during outreach or prep, and indicate those on the chart.

**STRATEGY FOUR:** Inquire with the referral source, parents/guardians, and/or other individuals with a close knowledge of the participant(s) about the participants' "key capacities" and indicate those on the chart, along with any accommodations they may recommend.

Key Capacities	Indicate what concerns have been raised and by whom	If concerns are significant and credible, circle and/or write in the most relevant accommodation(s) to be applied from prep to meeting
<p><b>Receptive language:</b> Functionally understanding verbal and non-verbal language; responding clearly to questions, instructions, and body cues.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coach and remind target participant(s) to signal when not understanding</li> <li>• Coach and remind facilitator and other participants to                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ simplify their language</li> <li>○ verbalize non-verbals</li> <li>○ speak slower</li> <li>○ articulate clearer</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Use hearing aids</li> <li>• Use written communication and alternative forms of expression such as visual aids, pictures/drawing, music, or skits</li> <li>• Use an interpreter</li> <li>• Coordinate with family/guardian to re-state/summarize</li> <li>• Other _____</li> </ul>
<p><b>Expressive language:</b> Expressing functionally using verbal and nonverbal language; expressing clear thoughts and uses consistent body language.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coach and remind other participant(s) to signal when they do not understand</li> <li>• Coach and remind target participant(s) to                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ simplify their language</li> <li>○ organize their thoughts before speaking</li> <li>○ verbalize non-verbals</li> <li>○ speak slower</li> <li>○ articulate clearer</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Use pre-prepared written script or recorded "testimonies"</li> <li>• Use written communication and alternative forms of expression such as visual aids, pictures/drawing, music, or skits</li> <li>• Use an interpreter</li> <li>• Coordinate with family/guardian to re-state/summarize</li> <li>• Other _____</li> </ul>

<p><b>Pragmatic language:</b> Understanding the balance of speaking and listening; taking turns speaking and listening without dominating, interrupting, or being nonresponsive</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coach and remind target participant(s) to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ take turns</li> <li>○ avoid interrupting</li> <li>○ respond to questions</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Use timer</li> <li>• Use written script</li> <li>• Other _____</li> </ul>
<p><b>Attention:</b> Maintaining and shifting focus as prompted; participating in a sequenced process for more than an hour</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shorten or speed up the process</li> <li>• Display time and communicate end time</li> <li>• Add movement breaks to the process</li> <li>• Have bright, hot colors in the centerpiece</li> <li>• Use sensory tools such as fidgets and specialized seating</li> <li>• Optimize lighting, smell, sound, and temperature (i.e. sunlight or imitation natural light, aromatherapy, quiet or calming sounds, and warmer temperatures)</li> <li>• Reducing visual distractions beyond the space</li> <li>• Other _____</li> </ul>
<p><b>Memory:</b> Recalling events from the past; recounting things that have happened with consistency and detail</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coach and remind target participant(s) to use notes</li> <li>• Use written or visual aids such as scripts, storyboards, agenda, or typed prompts, etc.</li> <li>• Invite others with knowledge of the past</li> <li>• Other _____</li> </ul>
<p><b>Sensory processing:</b> Managing a variety of sensory stimuli in the environment; remaining present and attentive</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have target participant(s) habituate to the space prior</li> <li>• Use sensory tools such as fidgets and specialized seating</li> <li>• Minimize bright lighting and background noise, including with shades and headphones</li> <li>• Reduce visual distractions beyond the space</li> <li>• Other _____</li> </ul>
<p><b>Intellectual processing:</b> Understanding complex or abstract information; following moral reasoning and logical arguments</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coach and remind target participant(s) to signal when not understanding</li> <li>• Coach and remind facilitator and other participants to simplify their ideas</li> <li>• Use written communication, visual aids, and/or skits</li> <li>• Coordinate with family/guardian to re-state/summarize</li> <li>• Other _____</li> </ul>
<p><b>Emotional literacy:</b> Identifying and expressing emotions; verbally and non-verbally articulating or exhibiting past or present sadness, remorse, anger, etc</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coach and remind target participant(s) to identify and express emotions</li> <li>• Use an emotional vocabulary chart</li> <li>• Use pre-prepared written script or recorded "testimonies"</li> <li>• Use written communication, visual aids, and/or skits</li> <li>• Coordinate with family/guardian to re-state/summarize</li> <li>• Other _____</li> </ul>
<p><b>Self regulation of the nervous system:</b> Managing the activation of the body's stress/trauma response; remaining engaged and non-aggressive</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coach and remind target participant(s) to identify and deal with triggers</li> <li>• Coach and remind target participant(s) to signal when needing a break or other support</li> <li>• Prepare with target participant(s) to identify and avoid/mitigate triggers such as re-telling of events, trigger words, and proximity to individuals</li> <li>• Use sensory/somatic calming techniques (breathing)</li> <li>• Invite a professional support into the process</li> <li>• Other _____</li> </ul>

<b>Physical ability:</b> Having the needed hearing, vision, and mobility		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use sign language interpretation or lip reading and instruct participants on protocols</li> <li>• Use written communication, brail, vision/hearing aids, service animals, mobility devices</li> <li>• Use an accessible space</li> <li>• Other _____</li> </ul>
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NOTES:

- If you have the target participant(s) or their guardian's consent, consider having them, the facilitator, or a specialist support person educate the other participants about any of the above differences in capacity, so that the target participant is not perceived as lacking honesty, sincerity, or empathy.
- If confusing to other participants, make sure to explain the purpose of any accommodations to participants, revealing only as much about the target participant's condition as you have consent to.
- Standard elements of many restorative practices such as prep meetings, voluntary participation, rounds, support persons, talking/centerpieces, co-created values and norms are already valuable for maximizing the inclusion of all.

Developed by Restorative DC in consultation with a variety of special educators and with reference to Nicholas Burnett and Margaret Thorsborne, *Restorative Practice and Special Needs*, Jessica Kingsley Publishers (Philadelphia 2015).