Let's Communicate Section 3

GOAL PLANNING

A handbook for people working with children with communication difficulties

United Nations Children's Fund
New York

Rehabilitation Unit
World Health Organization
Geneva

Rehabilitation Unit
Ministry of Health, Zimbabwe
In the last section we looked at the assessment of children with communication difficulties.

In this section we are going to look at goal planning to help children with communication difficulties.

By the end of this section you should be able to
- interpret assessment forms
- define the long and short term goals of working with children with communication difficulties
- recognise appropriate communication activity ideas
- use activity ideas to draw up goal plans.
In the previous section we looked at the assessment of children with communication difficulties. Now, we will look at goal planning. This will help us to fill in page 4 of the assessment form which is shown on page 3 of this section.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>What do you mean by goal planning?</strong></td>
<td>After assessment we need to think about what skills a child needs to learn. These will be the goals for the child. We then need to think about which activities will help the child to learn these new skills, and who will carry out these activities. This is goal planning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Why do we need to make goal plans?</strong></td>
<td>Making a goal plan forces us to think precisely about what a child needs and exactly how these needs can be met. A goal plan gives focus and direction to what we do — without this we have no measure of the child’s achievements or what we are aiming for. A good goal plan ensures that a child will make progress — this is encouraging for everyone involved.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>When would we do a goal plan?</strong></td>
<td>After every assessment of a child’s communication we should write up a goal plan. Just as we need to update a child’s assessment as time goes on, so do we need to update his goal plan. Assessment and goal planning are both ongoing!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>How do you make a goal plan?</strong></td>
<td>The first thing we need is a good assessment of the child’s strengths and needs. Once we have this we can start to plan our goals and start thinking about appropriate activities for helping the child to reach the goals.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
We cannot overestimate the importance of good goal planning....

Parents bring child to see you.  
Good goal planning.  
Parents eager to try to help their child.  
Goals achieved.  
Child progresses.  
Everyone involved is happy.  
Parents return to see you.  

Small, realistic goals. 
Parents well taught.  

Goal plan reviewed and updated...

Parents bring child to see you.  
Poor goal planning.  
Parents eager to try to help their child.  
Goals not achieved.  
Child does not progress.  
Everyone involved is discouraged.  
Parents do not return to see you.

Big, unrealistic goals.  
Parents not taught well.  

...and now we are ready to start....
Step by step guide to goal planning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aims</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Long term goal :</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>goals :</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Follow up appointment date?
Name of interviewer : ............
Date : .............

When you see the parent and child again, use the assessment form and the goal plan to review the child's progress. Update the goal plan accordingly.

When you see the parent and child again, use the assessment form and the goal plan to review the child's progress. Update the goal plan accordingly.

1. Take your completed assessment form
2. Look at each of the child's communication skills and note his areas of difficulty (needs).
3. It is these areas of difficulty that need to be worked on. Your long term goal will be to improve these.
4. Write them down on page 4 of the assessment form under "LONG TERM GOAL". See page 22 of this section.
5. Decide which communication skills of the long term goal need to be worked on first. See page 4 of this section.
6. Think of three or four goals that would help to develop these communication skills. These will be your short term goals. Write them on the assessment form in the column, "SHORT TERM GOALS".
7. Now think of activities to encourage each of the four skills. See activity pages, page 5 onwards of this section. Write down the details of the activities you have chosen in the column "HOW"
8. Under the column "BY WHOM" write down who will carry out the activities with the child.
9. Fill in the details at the bottom of the goal plan: your name, the date of assessment, and the date when you will see the parent and child again.
10. This is your goal plan. Go over it with the child's parents and teach them to carry it out at home.

O.K. - I think I understand so far, but I have a few questions I want to ask you. Firstly, in your step by step guide you say that we should decide which areas of difficulty to work on. But if a child has difficulty in many areas, how do we decide which areas to work on first?

That's a good question - now let me try to answer it for you... One way that can help you to decide is to think of the building up of a child's communication skills as being like the building up of a house... with the parents and family being the builders... Remember, this is an idea that we looked at in Section 1...
The communication house

Just as a house can stand without paint, a child can communicate without speech.

Just as we build up a house brick by brick, so is a child’s communication built up skill by skill.

We can think of **attention** as being the foundation of the house. It is the most important skill. Without this the child will have great difficulty learning the other skills needed for communication.

We can think of **listening, imitation, taking turns** and **play** as the bricks of the house. These help to build up a child’s **understanding** and use of **gesture**, which form the roof. We can think of **speech** as being the paint of the house. This completes the communication house.

When we are looking at the areas of difficulty a particular child has, we need to remember the order in which the house is built up. Foundation first, bricks next, then the roof and lastly the paint. This is the order in which the communication skills are built up, and the order in which we should work on them.

It is important to remember that all of the communication skills develop slowly from birth over time and that they are dependent on each other. No skill develops in isolation. The development of one skill is likely to lead to improvement in the other skills.

So... by building up all these skills, we open the door for communication to take place.

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So, to come back to your question - If a child has difficulty in several areas, remember how the communication house is built up and this will help you to decide which area to work on first. Let's think of John Muponda - he had difficulties in attention, listening, play, understanding, and gesture. So we will choose to work on attention and listening because they are the first bricks of the communication house. Once these skills are developing well, we will move on to other areas.

...Now... what other questions were you wanting to ask me?
Well, my second question is this ... Once we've decided which areas of difficulty we're going to concentrate on, how do we know what activities to give the child to build up that skill?

Another good question! It is sometimes difficult to think of activities to give a child, but carry on reading and on the following pages you will find plenty of ideas ...

About our activity pages...

- Pages 6-19 show activities that can be used to develop the communication skills of:
  - attention (p.6)
  - listening (p.8)
  - turn taking and imitation (p.10)
  - play (p.12)
  - understanding (p.14)
  - gesture (p.16)
  - speech (p.18)

- These ideas are designed to be used in conjunction with the assessment form. The activities are divided into the same developmental stages as the columns on the assessment form.

- You will notice that some of the activities appear on several of the pages. This is because one activity can benefit several different skills.

- All the activities make use of everyday objects and situations. No expensive equipment is needed!

- Remember, these pages only give you suggestions of ideas — you and the parents will be able to think of many more activities that are just as good.

Now let's look at the activity ideas for each communication skill in more detail ...
Attention

- This is the child’s ability to concentrate on people and things around her.
- A child needs good attention in order to learn any new skill.
- The development of attention starts soon after birth, when the child first looks at her mother’s face.
- It develops into the ability to spend time concentrating on a single activity, and to have one’s attention directed by an adult.
- The first two stages of “attention” concentrate on encouraging the child to show more interest in people and situations.
- The later stages concentrate on encouraging the child to be interested in things going on around her, and to concentrate for longer periods on more difficult activities.

Stage 1: 0-6 months

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hold your child close. Talk to her and smile, so that she looks at you.</th>
<th>Talk and sing to your child.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image1.png" alt="Image" /> <img src="image2.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td><img src="image3.png" alt="Image" /> <img src="image4.png" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hang objects so that your child can look at them and touch them.</td>
<td>Play peek-a-boo.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image5.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td><img src="image6.png" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Stage 2: 6-12 months

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Show your child when someone walks by.</th>
<th>Encourage your child to watch you. Talk about what you are doing.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image7.png" alt="Image" /> <img src="image8.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td><img src="image9.png" alt="Image" /> <img src="image10.png" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roll a ball along side your child. Encourage her to watch it.</td>
<td>Make your face happy/sad.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image11.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td><img src="image12.png" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Stage 3: 12-18 months

- Point out noises and nearby sounds to your child.
- Pretend play with everyday objects.

Stage 4: 18 months-3 years

- Build a tower.
- Dance and sing simple songs.

Stage 5: 3-5 years

- Tell your child a story.
- Bang rhythms for him to copy.
- This is the child's ability to listen carefully to sounds and to speech.
- A child needs to be able to listen carefully if she is to learn and understand spoken language.
- The development of listening starts soon after birth when a child becomes aware of all sounds and begins to respond to them.
- It develops into the ability to have selective listening.
- The first two stages of "listening" concentrate on encouraging the child to listen to all sounds and voices.
- The later stages are aimed at encouraging the child to listen more carefully so as to help her understand sounds and speech.

**Stage 1: 0-6 months**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hold your child and talk to her.</th>
<th>Call your child's name, and smile at her.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hold your child and talk to her.</td>
<td>Call your child's name, and smile at her.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little baby hello!</td>
<td>Hello Chip!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Make bathing fun.</th>
<th>Talk and sing to your child.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Make bathing fun.</td>
<td>Talk and sing to your child.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Splash! Splash!</td>
<td>Rock a-baby!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Stage 2: 6-12 months**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shake a rattle.</th>
<th>Encourage your child to listen to different sounds.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shake a rattle.</td>
<td>Encourage your child to listen to different sounds.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Play finger games with rhymes and songs.</th>
<th>Talk about objects.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Play finger games with rhymes and songs.</td>
<td>Talk about objects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>clap.clap!</td>
<td>Doll!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Stage 3: 12-18 months

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ask him for well-known objects.</td>
<td><em>Get your shoes.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name parts of the body for him to touch.</td>
<td><em>Touch your head.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make different noises when you play.</td>
<td><em>Yummm, Yummm, beep.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Give him choices.</td>
<td><em>Do you want the car or the doll?</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Stage 4: 18 months-3 years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tell him what you are doing.</td>
<td><em>Mum's washing the dolly.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Build and knock down towers.</td>
<td><em>1, 2, 3... go!</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play musical bumps.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copy simple rhythms.</td>
<td><em>Listen...</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Stage 5: 3-5 years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Encourage him to listen carefully to different noises.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play games where he must listen for his name.</td>
<td><em>Chips! Touch your head.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make loud and soft noises for him to copy.</td>
<td><em>Listen. Now you do it.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play shops.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• This is the child’s ability to take turns in games with people, and to copy other people’s actions, sounds and words.
• A child needs to be able to take turns in order to interact with other people. She needs to be able to imitate so that she can learn new skills.
• The development of turntaking and imitation starts when a baby is still young with the mother copying her baby’s actions and sounds, and the baby copying her in turn.
• The first two stages of "turntaking and imitation" concentrate on developing turntaking and imitation through direct contact with another person in simple games.
• The later stages concentrate on involving the child in more complex activities where greater co-operation and understanding is needed.

Stage 1: 0-6 months

Copy what your child does - smiling, laughing, frowning.

Talk to your child and copy her sounds.

Tickle your child.

Take turns splashing.

Stage 2: 6-12 months

Make dressing fun.

Play peek-a-boo.

Play finger and hand games.

Make each other laugh.
Stage 3: 12-18 months

Help your child to copy you.

Bang rhythms on a pot. Take turns.

Play clapping games.

Copy your child.

Stage 4: 18 months-3 years

Take turns with your child.

Wave bye-bye.

Play "Simon says".

Help praise him for trying to copy speech.

Stage 5: 3-5 years

Let your child help you.

Play ball games with other children.

Play "catches".

Sing rhymes and songs together.
• This is the child's ability to learn in an imaginative, creative and enjoyable way, using the people and objects in her environment.
• A child needs to be able to play because it is through this that she learns all the other skills needed for communication.
• The development of play starts soon after birth when a baby enjoys herself making and listening to sounds, and watching and touching faces.
• It develops into the ability to play complex games with rules.
• The first two stages of "play" concentrate on teaching the child simple games involving one other person and simple objects.
• The later stages look at more imaginative play and more complicated games.

Stage 1: 0-6 months

- Play games with your baby-tickling and blowing.
- Let her feel your face.
- Hang objects for her to see and touch.
- Play peek-a-boo.

Stage 2: 6-12 months

- Play finger games.
- Play "body games" - rock her, throw her, tickle her.
- Give her things to hold. Talk about them.
- Let her feel many different toys.

Here's a cup. Cup!

Ooh! Is that soft?
Stage 3: 12-18 months

- Tie a toy to some string for him to pull.
  - Make the toy disappear and then come back again.
  - "Where has it gone? Here it is!"

- Bang on pots and boxes.
  - "Bang! bang!"

Stage 4: 18 months-3 years

- Build a tower together using tins or blocks.
  - "Another one... well done!"

- Play with boxes and cartons in the sand or mud.

- Make finger puppets.

- Play with water.
  - "Eeek!

Stage 5: 3-5 years

- Hide objects in a bag for him to feel and guess what they are.
  - "What is it?"
  - "Ah!

- Make an obstacle course.

- Make animals from mud.
  - "There's a cow, and a pig..."

- Make posting boxes.
- This is the child’s ability to make sense of people, situations and language.
- A child needs to be able to understand words and gestures and situations in order to take part in communication.
- The development of understanding starts soon after birth when the child begins to make sense of the things she sees and hears.
- It develops into the ability to understand adult language and complex situations.
- The first three stages of "understanding" concentrate on encouraging simple understanding in everyday situations.
- Stages four and five look more specifically at the understanding of words and simple sentences.

**Stage 1: 0-6 months**

Hold her close and talk to her.  |  Show her everyday sounds.
---|---
[Image: baby and mother holding a toy]
[Image: woman showing a chicken with her baby]

Hang leaves, tins, pods for her to see and feel.  |  Talk to her when you are bathing and dressing her.
---|---
[Image: woman showing leaves to a baby]
[Image: woman bathing and dressing a baby]

**Stage 2: 6-12 months**

Talk about everyday sounds.  |  Always use gestures and speech together.
---|---
[Image: woman showing a train]
[Image: children holding signs saying "Thank you", "Rye-aye", "Mum", "Fungu"

Wait for your child to ask for things.  |  Let her copy what you are doing.
---|---
[Image: woman asking a child what she wants]
[Image: child asking a woman if she is cooking]
Stage 3: 12-18 months

Help him to pretend.

Pretend to feed dolls and people.

Ask him to fetch objects for you.

Give him errands.

Stages 4 and 5: 18 months-5 years

A child needs to understand many different types of words. Here are some examples.

Choose some words from each column and help your child to understand them. Use them often in games and everyday situations. Choose those which express his needs and interests. Gradually add more words. Do not rush the child. Do not force him to speak.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>People</th>
<th>Things</th>
<th>Social</th>
<th>Actions</th>
<th>Describing words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mum</td>
<td>Milk</td>
<td>Bye-bye</td>
<td>Eat</td>
<td>Big</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dad</td>
<td>Water</td>
<td>Hello</td>
<td>Wash</td>
<td>Small</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child's name</td>
<td>Cup</td>
<td>Thank you</td>
<td>Sleep</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grandma</td>
<td>Plate</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Sit</td>
<td>Bad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grandpa</td>
<td>Ball</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Drink</td>
<td>Hard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auntie</td>
<td>Head</td>
<td>I want</td>
<td>Go</td>
<td>Soft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Me</td>
<td>Hands</td>
<td>Where?</td>
<td>Come</td>
<td>Pretty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You</td>
<td>Legs</td>
<td>Here</td>
<td>Take</td>
<td>Sweet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mine</td>
<td>Bus</td>
<td>There</td>
<td>Touch</td>
<td>Rough</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yours</td>
<td>Table</td>
<td>What?</td>
<td>Walk</td>
<td>Smooth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dog</td>
<td></td>
<td>Run</td>
<td>Slow</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The way a child is spoken to will affect his understanding...

- Speak clearly to him
- Use simple sentences
- Use everyday words
- Talk about what interests him and what he can see
• This is the child's ability to use body movements, signs and facial expression to communicate a message.
• A child needs to be able to use gesture as a way of expressing herself.
• The development of gesture starts soon after birth when a child cries or wriggles her body, and the mother responds to these gestures by feeding her child, or by changing her napkin.
• It develops into the ability to use more sophisticated gestures with speech, for effective communication.
• The first three stages of "gesture" concentrate on encouraging the child to use simple gestures in everyday situations.
• Stages four and five look at using more specific gestures for communication.

**Stage 1: 0-6 months**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Make your face interesting for her to watch.</th>
<th>Smile at each other.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Make eye contact.</td>
<td>Point out interesting things.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hello Chipo!</td>
<td>Look! Chickens!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Stage 2: 6-12 months**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Help her to reach for objects.</th>
<th>Give her objects she reaches for.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Look! A puppy!</td>
<td>Do you want the ball?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Talk about things you see. Point at them.</th>
<th>Play finger games.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Look! Chicken</td>
<td>Fingers, fingers 1, 2, 3!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Stage 3: 12-18 months

Wave bye-bye and hello. Show your child how to clap.

Let him point to things he wants. Give him things and talk about them.

Stages 4 and 5: 18 months-5 years

In natural, everyday situations use gestures to accompany your speech. When your child tries to use gestures respond immediately and praise him. It is important that every person who has contact with the child knows the gestures that he uses and makes an effort to use them, too.

Here are some examples of gestures you can use:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Thank you</th>
<th>Bye-bye</th>
<th>Drink</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image1" alt="Gesture" /></td>
<td><img src="image2" alt="Gesture" /></td>
<td><img src="image3" alt="Gesture" /></td>
<td><img src="image4" alt="Gesture" /></td>
<td><img src="image5" alt="Gesture" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Come</th>
<th>Where</th>
<th>Me</th>
<th>You</th>
<th>Food</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image6" alt="Gesture" /></td>
<td><img src="image7" alt="Gesture" /></td>
<td><img src="image8" alt="Gesture" /></td>
<td><img src="image9" alt="Gesture" /></td>
<td><img src="image10" alt="Gesture" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Man</th>
<th>Woman</th>
<th>Mother</th>
<th>Children</th>
<th>Hungry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image11" alt="Gesture" /></td>
<td><img src="image12" alt="Gesture" /></td>
<td><img src="image13" alt="Gesture" /></td>
<td><img src="image14" alt="Gesture" /></td>
<td><img src="image15" alt="Gesture" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>House</th>
<th>Milk</th>
<th>Bread</th>
<th>Water</th>
<th>Give</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image16" alt="Gesture" /></td>
<td><img src="image17" alt="Gesture" /></td>
<td><img src="image18" alt="Gesture" /></td>
<td><img src="image19" alt="Gesture" /></td>
<td><img src="image20" alt="Gesture" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• This is the child’s ability to make sounds and to put them together to form words and, later, sentences.
• A child needs to be able to use sounds or speech as a way of expressing herself.
• The development of speech starts soon after birth when a child makes cooing and babbling sounds.
• It develops into the ability to make all speech sounds and to put them together to make intelligible words and sentences.
• The first three stages of "speech" concentrate on encouraging the child to use sounds and words in playful situations.
• The later stages require the child herself to say out words and sentences and to use them for communication.

**Stage 1: 0-6 months**

- Hold and sing to your child.
- Talk to your child.
- Make bathing fun.
- Play peek-a-boo.

**Stage 2: 6-12 months**

- Get down to your child's level to talk.
- Respond to her sounds.
- Use your voice with expression.
- Use "sound words".
Stage 3: 12-18 months

Play games with sounds.
Make your voice go high and low when you speak.

Notice when your child makes sounds.
Copy them!
Point out noises and make them yourself.

Stage 4: 18 months-3 years

Make faces and sounds in a mirror for your child to copy.
Help your child to ask for things.

Give your child choices
Put interesting objects in a bag for him to pull out and name.

Stage 5: 3-5 years

Emphasize certain words for him to learn.
Hide an objects. Ask him which one’s missing?

Teach him and show him action words.
Tell him well known stories.
Step by step guide to using the activity ideas

1 Once you have assessed a child, decide on the communication skills the child needs help with (Remember, to develop these skills is your long term goal).

2 Decide on three or four goals that will help to develop these areas. These are the short term goals.

3 Turn to the relevant activity pages and choose one activity idea to achieve each short term goal.

4 Choose activities which are appropriate to the child’s level of functioning. Refer back to the child’s checklist to see at what stage she is functioning in each area.

5 Now, try out these activities with the child, to ensure they are appropriate. They should be neither too difficult nor too easy.

6 If you are happy that the activities you have chosen will help the child, write them on the goal plan, and teach them to the parents.

7 Add to, and change these activities as the child develops.
We completed pages 1, 2 and 3 of John Muponda’s assessment form in the previous section.

Now we are going to use this information to draw up an appropriate goal plan¹ for John.

¹ Adapted from Assessment of Communication Skills in Children form used at Children’s Rehabilitation Unit, Harare Central Hospital, Harare, Zimbabwe.
# Explanation of Goal Plan

## Aims

**Long term goal:** To improve the communication skills in which the child is having difficulty. This may take 12 months or more.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Short term goals</th>
<th>How?</th>
<th>By whom?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Write down 4 short term goals that will help the child to achieve his long term goal. A child should be able to achieve the short term goals in 3-6 months time.</td>
<td>What activities will we use to achieve the short term goal, and how will the child be taught? Change or add to these activities as the child develops over time.</td>
<td>State who will carry out the activities with the child. Ensure that someone has taken on responsibility for helping the child.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Goal no. 3.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Goal no. 4.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Now! It is most important to explain clearly to the parents the long and short term goals for their child. Be sure that they understand and agree with these goals, and that they know how we are going to achieve them.

---

Follow up appointment date? When and where we will next see the parents and child.

Name of interviewer: Your...name...

Date: Today's...date..................
**Goal plan for John Muponda**

**Aims**

**Long term goal:** To improve John's attention and listening skills.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Short term goals</th>
<th>How?</th>
<th>By whom?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. For John to show more interest in people. (ATTENTION)</td>
<td>Talk to John using an interesting face and voice. Encourage him to look at you as you talk to him.</td>
<td>All family members.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. For John to be more interested in things going on around him. (ATTENTION)</td>
<td>Draw John's attention to everyday things going on around him. Talk to him and encourage him to watch what is happening—for example, when you are preparing supper; or when a bus goes by; or when you are bathing him. Call John's name. Touch him gently on the arm and encourage him to turn to look at you.</td>
<td>Older brother.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. For John to respond when his name is called. (LISTENING)</td>
<td>Encourage John to listen to the sounds around him. Talk about the sounds with him and show him how they are made and what they mean. For example, clanging pots and dishes mean mealtime; the sound of footsteps means someone is coming.</td>
<td>All family members.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. For John to be interested in everyday sounds around him. (LISTENING)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sister.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Follow up appointment date? 24th October 1991.

Name of interviewer: M. Muziwa.

Date: 24/10/91.
Now you've completed page 4 of the assessment form........

- Does my goal plan take into account what the parents see as their child's main areas of need?

- Have I explained clearly to the parents the long and short term goals for their child so that they have realistic ideas of what their child can achieve?

- Are the goals and activities I have given appropriate and can they be carried out in the child's home?

- Have I planned the child's goals in small steps so that they are realistic and achievable?

- Have I given the family too many activities to do with the child, or have I given a small number that are more likely to be carried out?

- Do I know exactly who will carry out the activities with the child at home? Have I taught that person well?

Well done! You've now completed the goal plan, and the assessment form!

But hang on - I have a final question! You keep mentioning teaching parents. Why is this so important and how should I go about it?

Another good question - and one that we will look at now. Read on ....
It is absolutely essential to teach parents how to work with their child in the home. It is they who can help him most – they live with him, and they know and understand him better than we ever will. Remember! Parents are the most important people.

A step by step guide to teaching parents to carry out activities

1. Take one activity at a time.
2. Describe the activity to the parents.
3. Explain clearly how the activity will help the child.
4. Do the activity yourself with the child, while the parents watch.
5. Now let the parents do the activity.
6. If they are not doing the activity quite as you wanted, show them where they are going wrong and let them try again.
7. Ask the parents to explain to you why they are doing the activity and how it will help their child.
8. Once you have been through all the activities ask the parents if they have any questions and whether they understand all they have been told.
9. If possible, give the parents a written goal plan (in their own language), to take home to share with the family.
10. Make sure you write down for the parent, on the child’s card when and where you will next see him, and make sure you write down on your own records those same details.

As well as these steps, there are certain other points that we must always remember and think about in our work with parents...
• Do the parents have a good understanding of what is wrong with their child?

• Do they have realistic expectations of their child? Do they know that progress takes time and may be slow — their child will not change immediately but they should try not to be discouraged.

• Do they feel confident to explain their child’s problems and needs to the rest of their family and community? Do they have the support of these people?

• Do the parents understand the aims of the activities you have given them?

• If someone other than the parents is going to work with the child will the parents be able to teach them adequately?

• If the activities use toys, do the family have these at home? Also are they able to put some time aside each day to work with their child? Emphasize to the parents that many activities can be carried out during everyday situations.

Hang on! - you've been talking so much about parents, you've forgotten about me! I'm the one who's being taught, so if you want me to learn you must also remember...
• praise me when I try.
• be consistent with me.
• be patient.
• and most of all, make it fun!
Once we have taught the parents the goal plan, we need to think about our role in helping the child in the future. Essentially, this will consist of

- reviewing the child’s progress from time to time
- passing on our skills to the parents. (This will be looked at in Section 11 “Working in Groups”)

But now, let’s look at what is involved in reviewing a child’s progress.

### Reviewing a child’s progress

This involves

- asking the parents if they have been able to carry out the activities you gave them last time.

- asking the parents if they have noticed any change in their child and updating the child’s assessment form accordingly.

- looking again at the goals that were set for the child. Set new goals and give new activities, as necessary.

- making the necessary referrals as the child’s needs change.

- answering any questions the parents may have.

- providing the parents with ongoing encouragement and support.

**REMEMBER!**

Every time we see a child we must be sure to keep a written record of the advice we give and the progress the child is making. Also, we should note down any changes in the family situation and any other factors that might effect our involvement with the child.

And don’t forget—our notes should be clear enough for anyone to follow!

Very often it is possible, and indeed best, to combine reviewing a child’s progress with passing on our skills to parents. The running of parent and child groups is an effective way of achieving both these aims. This will be looked at in detail in Section 11.
Important points to remember about goal planning

- A good goal plan is essential for giving direction to our involvement with a child.

- Parents must be involved in goal planning. They are the most important people because it is they who can help their child most.

- A goal plan should be designed to meet the needs of each individual child.

- In order to draw up a good goal plan, we must first have done a good assessment.

- A goal plan must be realistic, with small, achievable steps.

- Setting 4 short term goals at one time is usually enough.

- The short term goals we set must be related to the long term goals we want the child to achieve.

- When goal planning, we need to think carefully about which skills we should develop first. Remember the communication house!

- The ideas on the activity pages can help us draw up an appropriate goal plan. Use them!

- Our teaching of activities to parents must be thorough.

- Goal planning is an ongoing process and a goal plan should be updated as a child progresses.