

Switch Access - Sample Goals for Children who have Severe Multiple Disabilities

Exploration, mistakes and incorrect activations are an important part of the learning process for developing switch access. Opportunities to activate switches, without punishment, and observe results - both directly and through strategic feedback from a partner are essential. For children who are learning switch access, inappropriate switch activations should not be considered an indication of the lack of cognitive understanding by the child. They may instead show the child's active engagement in problem solving and/or indicate a need for more practice in controlling motor movements and shifting between two controlled movements. They may also be a sign of boredom and fatigue.

Since learning takes place when there is intent, purpose and variation, the child will need to be monitored for fatigue and boredom. Changing of activities is encouraged to keep motivation high. When possible, the child should be given the control of selecting and terminating activities.

Access goals need to be written with the above considerations in mind. Simply reducing the number and/or types or prompts needed for activating a switch is counterproductive to developing the active learning of motor-cognitive skills.

Note: Goals pertaining to learning to use switch access should not include other skills such as language and academic objectives. Those goals should be written separately to address just that component. This will help to identify specific areas of progress.

Measurement: It is not necessary, or usually useful, to take data every time a child interacts with switches. Instead, a pre-agreed upon sampling period done periodically can show a general pattern of progress. The child's general readiness state for learning and health should be taken into consideration for deciding when to collect data.

Sample Goals:

Note: Define allowed prompts and cues and switch setup for each goal below:

Modeling: The person working with the child should periodically take a turn using the same switches and if possible switches still in same, or relationally same, position that the child uses them. The person should use self talk (out loud) as that person takes her turn. For example: "Hmmm..... let me see, I see something hiding over here, I'm going to see if I can find him..... There he is!" or "Hmmm... I'm going to listen to my

choices... (while activating the 'mover' switch to go through a list of choices) Wheels, no, doors, no, wipers, no, horn, yes! I want to hear the horn verse!" (activating the select switch within view of the child) **Note:** slow motion activation with strategies to enhance the child's attention to what you are doing during your turn, may result in the child activating the select switch for you, which should be encouraged, but not required.

Prompts and cues: Person working with the child should present the activity, possibly take a turn modeling, and then provide an expectant pause for 30 seconds. If the child has not responded the person should make an indirect comment related to activity (not switches) such as "Oh no, he is hiding from us", "I wonder where he is", "I wonder which one you will play next", or "your turn". Prompts that refer to directly activating the switch such as "press your switch", or "push this one" should not be used.

After 30 sec expectant pause, and 30 seconds after indirect verbal cue as described above, the person working with the child can lightly brush or tap the child's cheek (or whatever body part the child will use to activate the switch) on the side that would result in an appropriate response. Verbally, you may state why activating that switch might be a good idea. For example, "Here are your choices", "over here" or "This side moves the hat". This prompt can also be used on both cheeks (or body part near the location of both switches) when you are encouraging the child to explore the options.

Note: Moving the child's head, arm or any body part is not used as a prompting strategy, but may be used by a physical or occupational therapist when the child initiates the movement and is practicing a particular movement. When this is done, the goal is learning the movement. The activity just provides the incentive.

Strategic feedback: Appropriate feedback should be given when the child activates either switch. For example: "You found him!", "I saw your head turn this way", "Oh, I guess he's not there", "I wonder where he is", "you picked the _____", "Oh, that is the one you wanted" or "that was a fun choice". Use of social responses and shared enjoyment are very appropriate after child activates a switch. Be specific and genuine with praise.

Switch setup: Define for each child.

Example: Padded switches positioned on both sides of her head on a parallel plane to her cheeks about 1.5 inches from her face, using loc-line mounts. Someone needs to periodically monitor the placement of the switches to make sure they stay within her reach as she plays.

Long Term Goal: (Name) will improve motor-cognitive coordination for activating one of two switches according to her preferences and situational appropriateness. She will appropriately use two switches that each perform a separate function, within a variety of functional activities for a variety of purposes.

1. (Name) will increase engagement and total number of switch activations to explore two switches with two functions over a variety of activities and purposes. Progress to be measured by percentage increase over baseline. Data is only taken when child activates a switch without prompts or cues beyond wait time.

Name:

date:

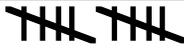
	Switch 1		Switch 2		Length of time engaged
Activity	Function	Activations	Function	Activations	minutes
Computer story book and sequenced talker	"Look at me, watch this, Did you see that?, etc."		Turn and read the next page of an book on the computer		7 min.
Two sequenced talkers	Sequential phrases of the Spider song		Comments: "Uh oh!, Oh no! Look out"		4 min.
Hide and Find activity on computer	Left side of screen		Right side of screen		5 min.

2. Given a switch that stops producing an effect or gives feedback indicating that it is incorrect, (name) will move to activate the other switch within 3-5 activations of the inappropriate switch. (Progress to be measured by percentage decrease in number of inappropriate activations over baseline.) Data is only taken when child activates a switch without prompts or cues beyond wait time.

Name:

date:

Activity	Switch 1 Function	Switch 2 function	Appropriate Activations	Inappropriate Activations	Minutes engaged:	Percentage appropriate activations

Hide and find Dora	Left side hiding place	Right side hiding place			8 min.	
Build a rocket	Build rocket	Load astronaut and blast off			6 min.	
Hats to Kyle	Move hat	Dance across the screen when hat is on head			4 min.	

3. (Name) will activate the more appropriate switch, given two switches two functions, within the natural context of an activity, with increasing accuracy. Progress to be measured by percentage increase over baseline. Data is only taken when child activates a switch without prompts or cues beyond wait time.

Name:

date:

Activity	Switch 1 Function	Switch 2 function	Appropriate Activations	Inappropriate Activations	Minutes engaged:	Percentage appropriate activations
Blocks with partner	"build up the blocks"	Switch toy to knock down blocks			5 min.	
Cutting with a partner to hold scissors and paper	Battery powered scissors	Sequenced talker: "more paper please", I need some more"			6 min.	

4. Using two switches on the computer, (Name) will select the location of a hidden object, when only a small amount of the object is visible behind a box on the screen.

Objects can start by showing at least 2" beyond the box and gradually decrease to less than 1/2". Progress to be measured by percentage increase over baseline.

Name:

Date:	Activity	Distance of hidden action showing	Appropriate Activations	Inappropriate Activations	Percentage appropriate activations
	Find Harry Potter	2"	 		

5. Given modeling and taking turns with a partner on the computer with two switches set up for a Stepping Stone 4 activity, (Name) will repeatedly activate the left (mover) switch to move a character across the screen to the right target item and then activate the right (get it) switch for a musical and animation sequence. . (Decreasing number of inappropriate activations over baseline.)

Name:

Date:	Activity	Appropriate Activations	Inappropriate Activations	Minutes engaged	Percentage appropriate activations
	Friends to me	 		6 min	

6. Given a personally motivating 'failure free with feedback' two switch step scanning activity on the computer, (Name) will use the left (mover) switch to step through choices and select something with her right (get it) switch (Stepping Stone 5) with increasing number of activations and length of interest over baseline.

Name:

Date	Activities selected by the child (one per line)	Minutes engaged	Number of switch activations (either switch)	Notes on affect and engagement of the child
	Errorless letter	14 min	 	Focused during creation, and pleased with

				printed product
	Launcher for choosing step scanning activities including videos	22 min	 	Opened and closed 4 activities. Spent most of the time on selecting YouTube videos

7. Given a target item in a two switch step scanning computer activity within an array of blanks, (Name) will use the left (mover) switch to step through choices and select targeted item with her right (get it) switch with increasing appropriateness over baseline. (Stepping Stone 6)

Name:

Date:	Activity	Appropriate Activations	Inappropriate Activations	Minutes engaged	Percentage appropriate activations
	Blank, blank, read	 		12 min	

8. Given a two switch step scanning activity with correct or more appropriate items in the array of items on the computer, (Name) will use the left (mover) switch to step through choices and select a correct or appropriate item with her right (get it) switch with increasing appropriateness over baseline. (Stepping Stone 7)

Name:

Date:	Activity	Appropriate Activations	Inappropriate Activations	Minutes engaged	Percentage appropriate activations
	Counting to 5		 	10 min	

9. Given a two switch step scanning activity on the computer customized for a specific academic concept (Name) will use the left (mover) switch to step through choices and select a correct item with her right (get it) switch to complete the task. (Stepping Stone 8) Note: Academic content now becomes the goal, with switch access listed as the method.