



SPECIAL NEEDS | FIELD GUIDE

When a support device is unavailable

Keep communication and participation possible while the device is repaired.

A note from Victoria

A broken or missing device can silence choices and make a whole day harder. Your child's voice does not disappear because a tool is unavailable.

What to do

Tell the school or care team which device is unavailable and when it may return. Ask for the established backup: low-tech communication board, paper choices, gestures, or another approved method. Show adults how your child indicates yes, no, discomfort, and a need to pause. Confirm who is arranging repair or replacement. Do not assume a temporary substitute works without your child's input.

Words you can use

"The usual communication device is unavailable today. What backup will each adult use, and how will you check that my child can still express needs?"

One useful step I can take today:

I could start with: Write the four messages your child most needs to communicate today.

The strength I see in you

You are keeping access to your child's voice at the center of the plan.

Educational peer support, not individualized medical, legal, or school advice. Partner with your child and their care or school team; consult a qualified advocate about rights questions.



SPECIAL NEEDS | WORKSHEET

When a support device is unavailable

Use this page in your own words. You can leave any part blank.

The backup communication method

How my child says yes, no, and pause

Who will arrange repair or replacement

My next manageable step

A person, service, or place I can turn to (if useful)

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