

## Who should conduct the assessment?

The VCSL should be completed in collaboration with people who are familiar with the child's expressive and receptive language. Deaf and hard of hearing professionals could assist family members or professionals with less fluent signing skills, using a team approach.

### This can include:

- Teachers who are familiar with the child's language abilities
- Early interventionists
- ECE service providers who are fluent signers and work directly with the child and family
- Families
- Speech Language Pathologists

## Cost

Manual and kit, includes DVD ASL glossary - \$149

Rating sheets (one per student), including licensing fee per assessment - \$1.10/each

Shipping and handling - \$8.75

Discounts available for bulk orders.

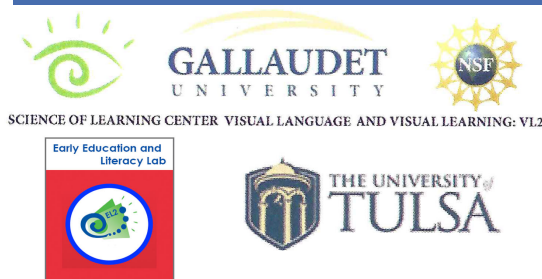
## Our Team

Our team of experts, drawn from multiple disciplines, is committed to conducting research of the highest scientific caliber, and also to sharing important findings with educators and parents in ways that will directly benefit the children we serve.

## Questions? Contact Us!

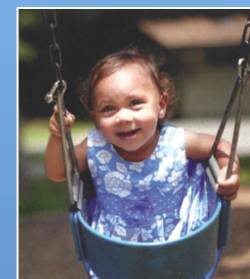
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## Visual Communication and Sign Language Checklist

for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children



A standardized comprehensive checklist used to assist in tracking young children's sign language development from birth to age 5.

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## How did the VCSL come about?

In the early 1990s, there was a rise in the establishment of ASL/English bilingual/bicultural education, which led to a focus on developing language acquisition checklists, to evaluate typical linguistic development for signing children. Teachers created sign language acquisition checklists, based on their knowledge of sign language acquisition and language assessment checklists developed for hearing, monolingual children.

The teacher-made checklists were useful, but they were not standardized. No norms existed to compare deaf and hard of hearing children's success in ASL/English bilingual classrooms to other children in similar settings, making it challenging to obtain a comprehensive assessment profile of deaf and hard of hearing children's language development. Parents often believed that their children were obtaining age-appropriate sign language milestones, but when these children arrived at kindergarten they frequently exhibited language delays. To address this situation, researchers obtained information from a variety of sources including schools for the deaf and organizations within America and Canada. These sources include the Signed Language Developmental Checklist by Mounty (1994), the Language Development Checklist (Enns, Zimmer, & Murray, 1994), checklists from

both the California School for the Deaf—Fremont and the Kansas School for the Deaf, as well as Marie Philip's ASL Developmental Milestones Checklist from the Ontario Cultural Society of the Deaf (2003). The checklists were merged into one standardized checklist and with feedback from teachers, linguistics, psycholinguists, and researchers involved with Gallaudet University's Science of Learning Center on Visual Languages and Visual Learning (VL2). It was revised in order to provide an accurate, reliable, and valid measure, named the *Visual Communication and Sign Language Checklist* or VCSL.

## What is the purpose of the VCSL?

- The VCSL assesses the developmental milestones of children from birth to age 5 who are visual learners and are acquiring sign language regardless of their level of hearing. It is presented in a user-friendly format that is accessible to parents and teachers, as well as specialists and experts.
- It monitors the child's developmental progress.
- If the child has developmental delays as indicated by the VCSL, the gaps in learning that are identified can be used to help plan intervention programs.
- Learning goals can be set.
- Appropriate teaching and learning materials can be developed.

## What materials are needed to administer the VCSL?

- VCSL is an observational tool used to document language in natural environments.
- No specialized materials or prompts are required to use the VCSL.
- The kit includes age-based norms and scoring procedures.
- The kit includes a VCSL DVD containing an ASL glossary for guidance in the assessment process.

