

Naturalistic Approaches to Augmentative and Alternative Communication

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Introduction & Disclosures

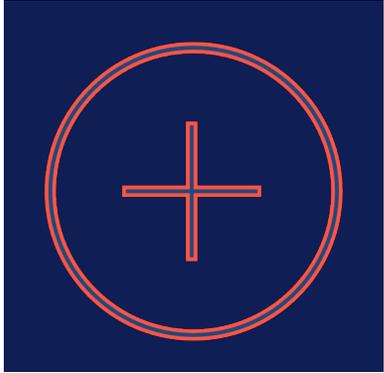
Kelsey Conlan, M.Ed. CCC-SLP (She, Her, Hers)

- Non-financial Disclosures:
 - Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental Disorders (LEND) Fellow at JFK Partners, University of Colorado - Anschutz Medical Campus
 - American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) Member
- Financial Disclosures:
 - Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental Disabilities (LEND) Award T73MCII044, from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

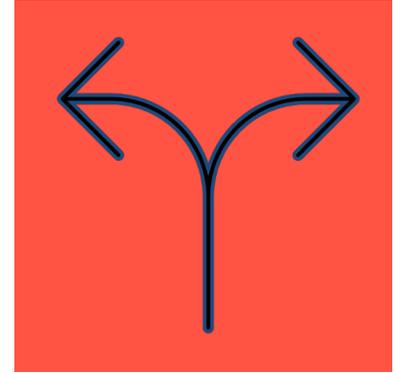


Learning Objectives

- Definition of Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC)
- Common myths of AAC
- Communicative functions
- AAC abandonment
- Naturalistic interactions & strategies
- Routines-based learning
- Diversity, equity, and inclusion
- Troubleshooting with AAC
- Resources



What is AAC?



Augmentative and Alternative Communication

"Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) includes all forms of communication (other than oral speech) that are used to express thoughts, needs, wants, and ideas"
-American Speech Language & Hearing Association (ASHA)



Reflect:

Have you used AAC?

What is easy about communicating with your child or student?

Where do you find challenges or breakdowns with communication?

Types of AAC



National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders

No Tech

"Unaided" - Gestures, Body language, Facial expressions, Manual Signing

"Aided" - Writing, Typing, Communication board, Picture communication system (e.g., PECS), Partner assisted communication

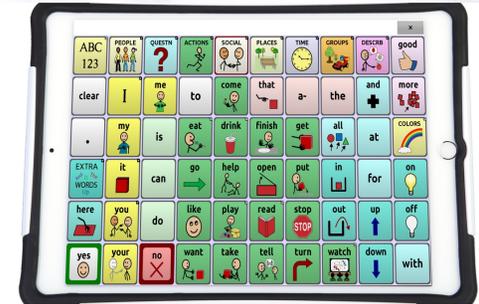


Talk to Me Technologies

Low/Light Tech

Switches & Message recording communication device (e.g., BIGMack)

Multiple message generating device (e.g., QuickTalker, GoTalk Now)



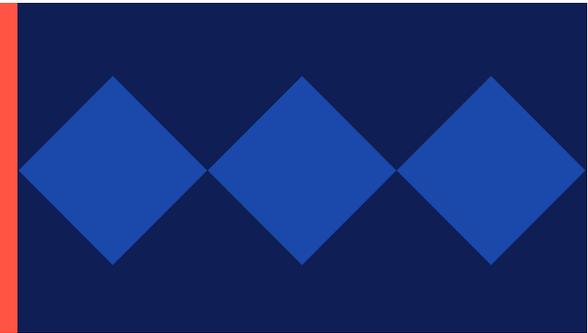
Sattilo

High Tech

Speech Generating Device (SGD) on a tablet or dedicated device with dynamic display

Eye-tracking software

Common Myths & Misconceptions



Will AAC hinder speech?

No!

May help facilitate **many forms** of communication

Are there any prerequisites to using AAC?

No!

No Cognitive, Visual, Linguistic, or Physical requirements

Is the main goal of AAC to have individuals request?

No!

Autonomous communication is the goal



National Joint Committee for the
Communication Needs of Persons
With Severe Disabilities (NJC)

COMMUNICATION BILL OF RIGHTS

All people with a disability of any extent or severity have a basic right to affect, through communication, the conditions of their existence. Beyond this general right, a number of specific communication rights should be ensured in all daily interactions and interventions involving persons who have severe disabilities. To participate fully in communication interactions, each person has these fundamental communication rights:

1. The right to interact socially, maintain social closeness, and build relationships
2. The right to request desired objects, actions, events, and people
3. The right to refuse or reject undesired objects, actions, events, or choices
4. The right to express personal preferences and feelings
5. The right to make choices from meaningful alternatives
6. The right to make comments and share opinions
7. The right to ask for and give information, including information about changes in routine and environment
8. The right to be informed about people and events in one's life
9. The right to access interventions and supports that improve communication
10. The right to have communication acts acknowledged and responded to even when the desired outcome cannot be realized
11. The right to have access to functioning AAC (augmentative and alternative communication) and other AT (assistive technology) services and devices at all times
12. The right to access environmental contexts, interactions, and opportunities that promote participation as full communication partners with other people, including peers
13. The right to be treated with dignity and addressed with respect and courtesy
14. The right to be addressed directly and not be spoken for or talked about in the third person while present
15. The right to have clear, meaningful, and culturally and linguistically appropriate communications

For more information, go to the NJC website at: www.asha.org/njc

Communication Bill of Rights

"To participate fully in communication interactions, each person has these fundamental communication rights:"



My Communication Bill of Rights

I have the right to interact socially, maintain social closeness, and build relationships.

I have the right to request desired objects, actions, events, and people.

I have the right to refuse or reject undesired objects, actions, events, or choices.

I have the right to express personal preferences and feelings.

I have the right to make choices from meaningful alternatives.

I have the right to make comments and share opinions.

I have the right to ask for and give information, including information about changes in routine and environment.

I have the right to be informed about people and events in one's life.

I have the right to access interventions and supports that improve communication.

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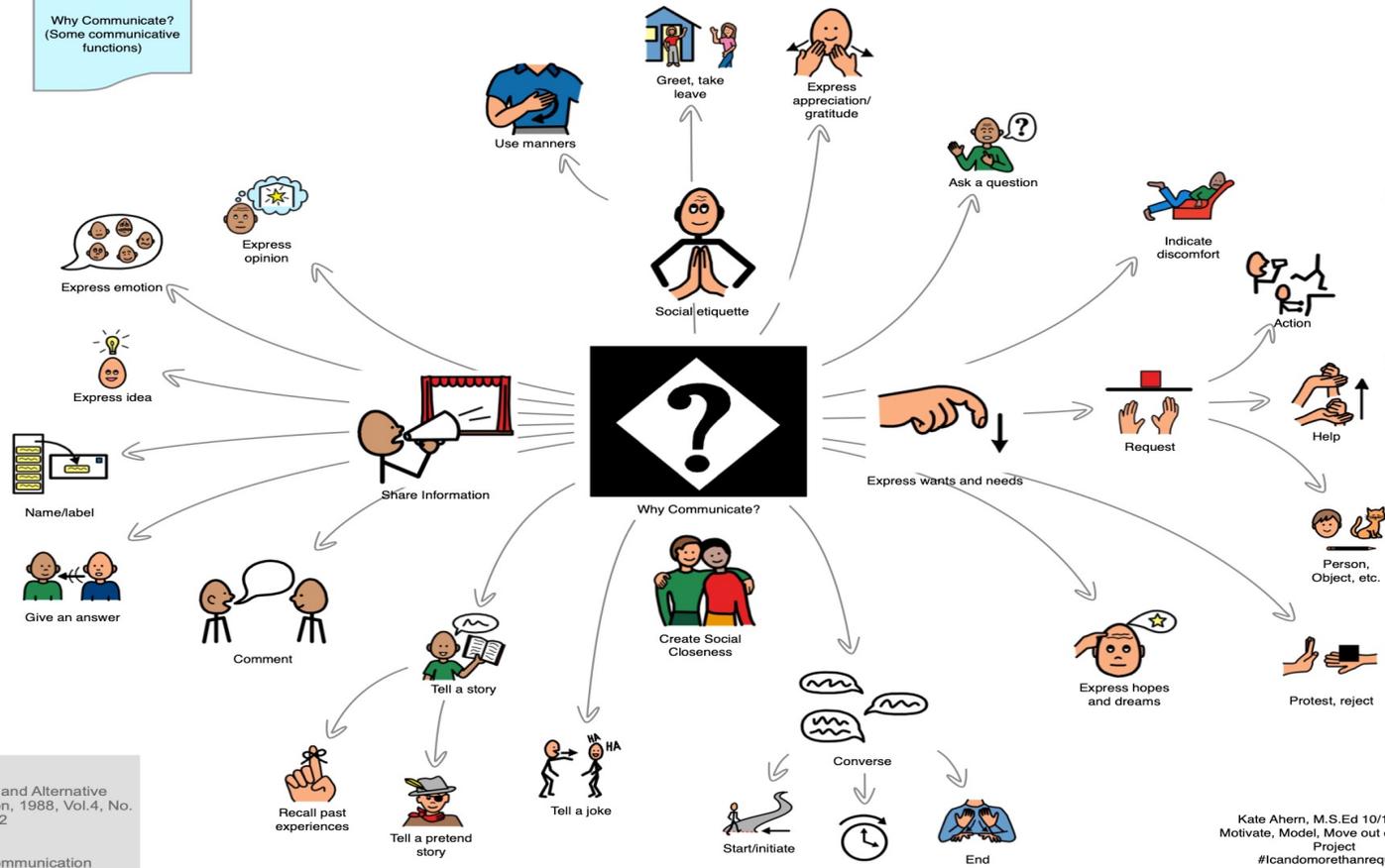
I have the right to have clear, meaningful, and culturally and linguistically appropriate communications.

Adapted from the NJC Communication Bill of Rights 2016, ASHA by Kate Ahern, M.S.Ed. Mayer-Johnson Communication Symbols Used with Permission

Communicative Functions

Way more than just requesting!

Why Communicate?
(Some communicative functions)



Communicate between different...

- People
- Places
- Groups

References:
Light, Janice
Augmentative and Alternative
Communication, 1988, Vol.4, No.
2: Pages 66-82
Tipton, Keisha
Multimodal Communication
Function Checklist through
PrAACtical AAC blog

Kate Ahern, M.S.Ed 10/19/2015
Motivate, Model, Move out of the Way
Project
#Icandomorethanrequest

AAC Abandonment

Unfortunately, many AAC users may abandon their AAC system.

Bruce Baker's Ergonomic Principle:

The *Motivation* to send a message

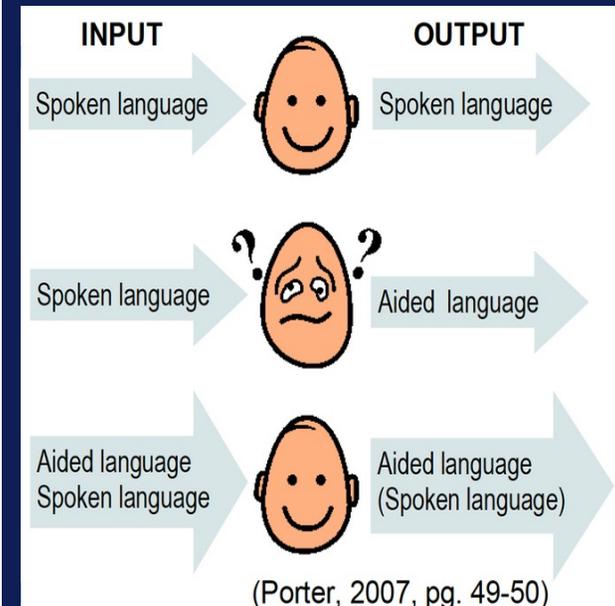
Cognitive, Linguistic, and Physical efforts to create that message

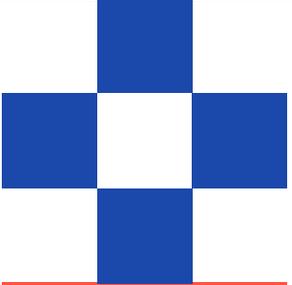
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Goal: Continue to **motivate** others by acknowledging that they are **understood**, and minimize the **efforts** it takes to produce an utterance

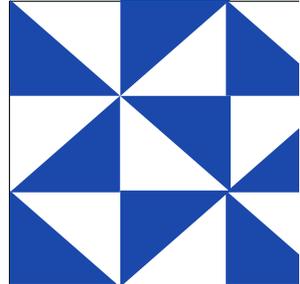
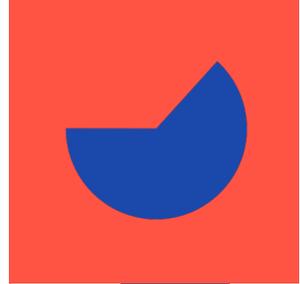
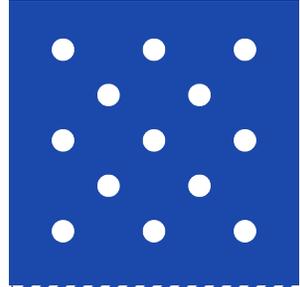
Aided Language Stimulation

- Model language in daily routines
- Input-Output should match
- Increase the # of exposures
- Immersion





AIDED LANGUAGE STIMULATION



Aided Language Stimulation

Model without Expectations

TEACH, DON'T TEST

Reduce the pressure

Engage in hands-on learning

Have a conversation

Model to connect

**Be your kid's Morgan
Freeman. Narrate
their lives as if they
were penguins.**



@lauratalkstooloud

MrsSpeechieP

Aided Language Stimulation

Instead of asking, "What is this?", try...



- Naming it: LOOK, it's a DOG!
- Describing it: Woah, that's a BIG, furry dog!
- Adding an Action: The dog JUMPS high!
- Marking the Quantity: I SEE ONE dog.
- Expressing a Feeling: I LIKE the dog.
- Socially Interacting: LET'S PLAY with the dog.

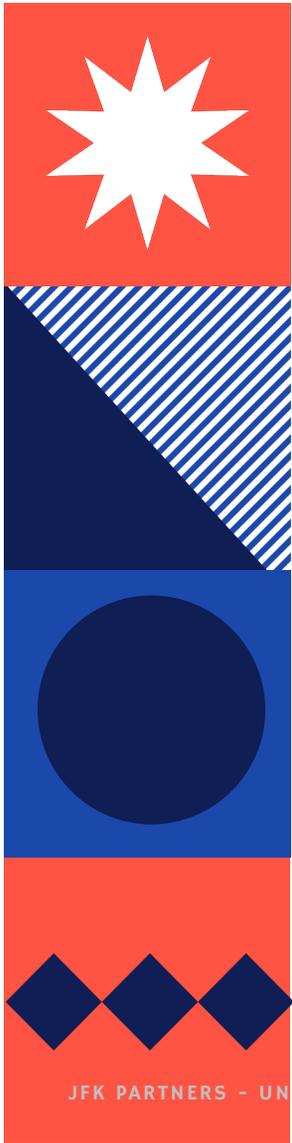


MINECRAFT



Effort + Engagement = Motivation

Motivation + Opportunity = Learning



SMORRES



Slow down



Model



Respect & Reflect

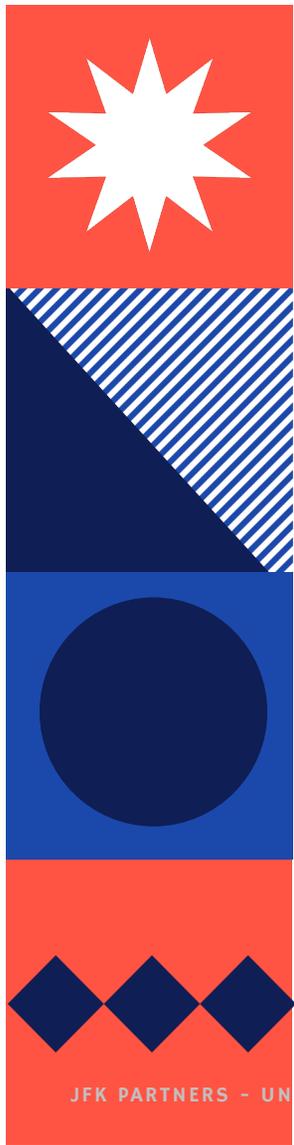


Expand



Stop





Communication Partner

Slow down & Wait



Be present



Ask genuine questions



Foster relationships



Respect & Acknowledge All Communication



WE ALL USE AAC



Genuine Communication over Compliance

Speed and Efficiency

Opportunities to Learn

Autonomy & Voice



CORE Vocabulary

You're about to drive home and realize
you locked your keys in your car!



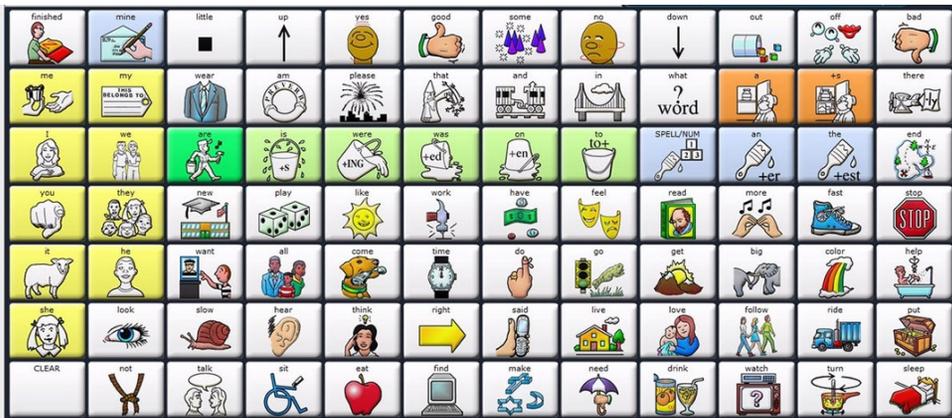
You call to ask for help and
say "Toyota Rav4", "Model
Number SC950123",
"Silver Grooves"

OR

You call to ask for help
and say "HELP", "OH NO",
"CAN'T GO", "IN THERE"

CORE & Fringe Vocabulary

CORE Boards



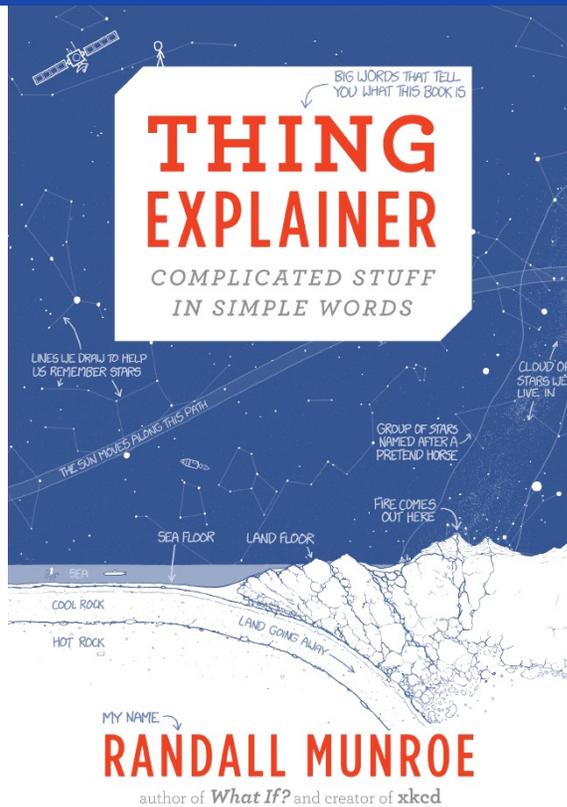
LAMP Words for Life - PRC-Salttillo

High Frequency & Flexible

- 80% of our language can be summed up in ~300 words
- Many action & location words
 - Lots of verbs, prepositions, pronouns
 - Few nouns
- Access to words used ALL THE TIME
- Motor planning
- Unique to each family

Type in the chat box 1-3 words or short phrases that you find yourself saying all day long

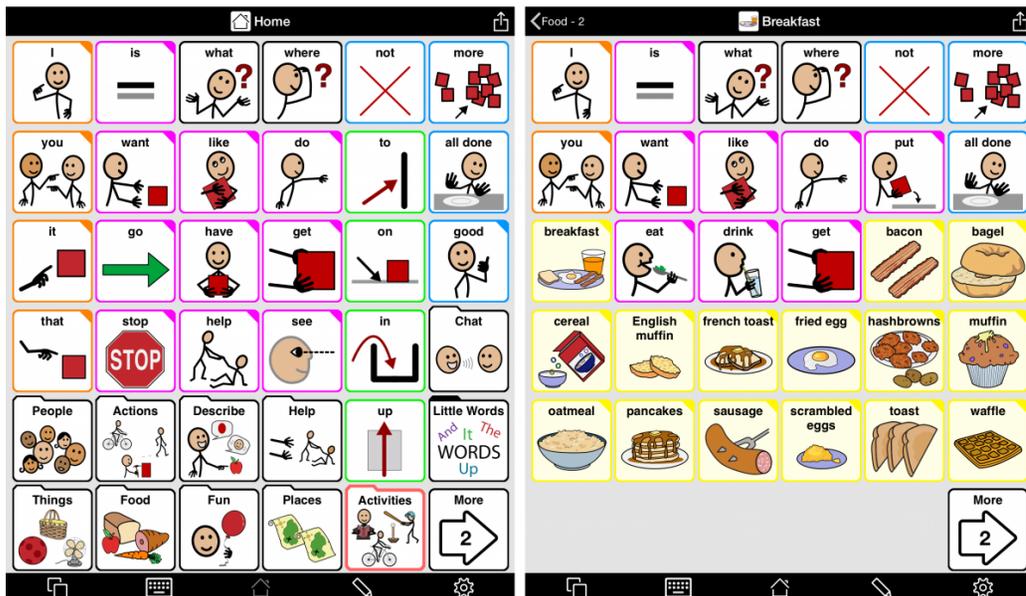
CORE & Fringe Vocabulary



High-Frequency words in action!

- “Boxes that make clothes smell better”
- “Bags of stuff inside you”
- “The pieces everything is made of”
- Washers and Dryers
- Cells
- Periodic table

CORE & Fringe Vocabulary

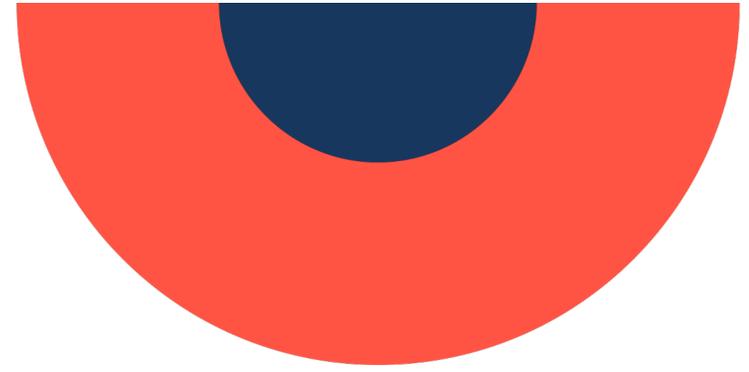
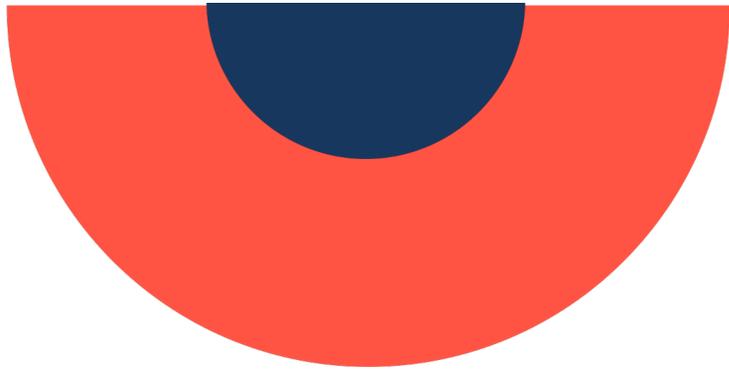


Proloquo2Go 4: Crescendo

Core-word-based template designed for different fringe words

Fringe Vocabulary for Motivation

- 20% of our everyday speech but can be important words!
- Ordering a specific drink at *Starbucks*
- Talking about your favorite *TV show*
- Participating in *class* discussions, etc.
- We don't limit speaking children's vocabularies
 - Why would we limit an AAC user's vocabulary?



Reflect:

Which of the following are high-frequency, flexible CORE words?

I

Want

Stop

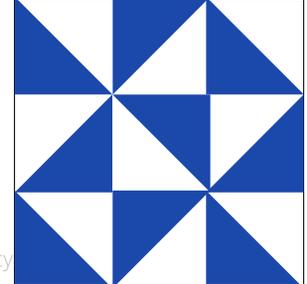
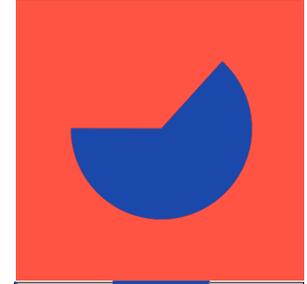
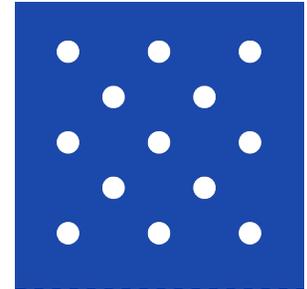
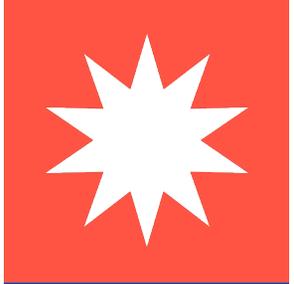
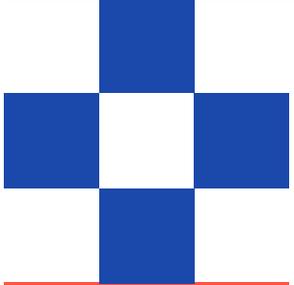
COVID-19

CORE & Fringe Vocabulary





ACCESS - AT THE PLAYGROUND





AAC Modeling: Playground

Comment!

- IT FUN
- THAT GOOD
- NOT LIKE IT
- UH OH
- YOU CRAZY
- LOOK THAT
- FEEL TIRED
- I HOT/COLD
- COOL!
- THINK GREAT
- EXCITING
- NOT GET ME!

Ask for Things!

- WANT SWING
- GO WALK
- NEED COAT
- DO MORE
- BIG PUSH
- SWING HIGH
- GET ME
- WANT TURN
- GO SLIDE



Tell Each Other What to Do!

- GET ON/OFF
- GIVE PUSH
- PUSH ME
- CLIMB UP
- COME DOWN
- DON'T HELP
- WATCH ME
- PLAY
- RUN FAST
- DO DIFFERENT
- STOP IT

There is a lot to talk about on the playground. What a great time to model AAC! Get outside and enjoy the playground together. That's the real goal! Use AAC to talk to your learner about the things they're interested in. Use comments and describing words to talk about their experience at the playground. Do what you can and build on it on your next trip to the playground.

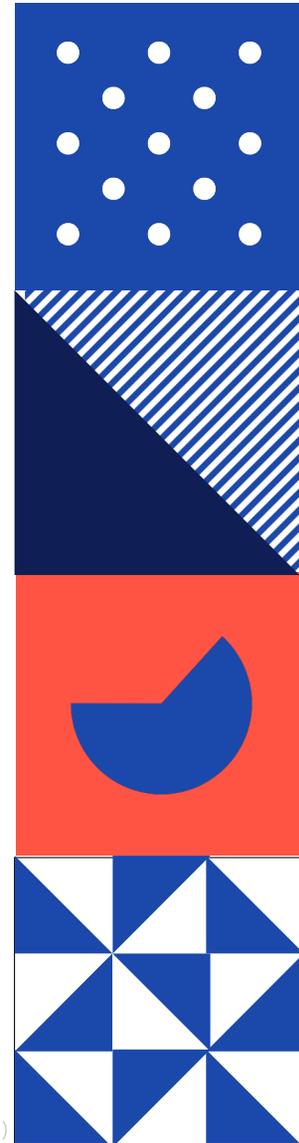


Ask Questions!

- WHAT DO?
- WHERE GO?
- WHO DO?
- WHO THAT?
- HOW PUSH?
- WHEN GO?

TIP: Make sure you have an AAC support that works well outside. A light tech book or a device with a no glare screen protector work well!

@the.aac.coach





Mary Katherine, M.S. CCC-SLP (@AACforAll)



ACCESS - DAILY ROUTINES

AAC Modeling: Baby Doll

Comment!

- UH OH STINKY
- IT DIRTY
- UPSET
- CLEAN DIAPER
- LOVE YOU
- IT OKAY
- YOU HUNGRY
- YUMMY
- BABY TIRED
- LOOK SLEEP
- QUIET
- GOOD BABY
- CUTE

Pretend!

- I HELP
- GIVE KISS
- YOU HOLD
- NEED CHANGE
- TAKE OFF
- GIVE BATH
- CLOTHES ON
- DRINK MILK
- WANT MORE
- NEED FOOD
- EAT BABY
- GO BED
- NIGHT NIGHT

Ask Questions!

- WHAT WRONG?
- WHY CRY?
- WHAT SMELL?
- WHAT WANT?
- WHAT EAT?

Talk About The Activity!

- COME PLAY
- DO MORE
- DO DIFFERENT
- PUT AWAY
- ALL DONE

Baby dolls are so cute and great for pretend play. Play with your AAC learner. Model language on your learner's AAC system. Do your best. Remember it's about connection over perfection!



@the.aac.coach



AAC Modeling: Getting Dressed

Comment!

- LOOK GOOD!
- NICE LOOK
- NEW!
- GET SMALL
- UH OH DIRTY
- BEAUTIFUL!
- COLD OUTSIDE
- YOU FANCY!
- ITCHY!
- DON'T LIKE
- LIKE RED

Tell Each Other What to DO

- PUT ON
- TAKE OFF
- NEED WASH!
- GET SHIRT
- HAVE CHANGE
- PANTS ON!
- LOOK FAVORITE
- HELP ME

Ask Questions!

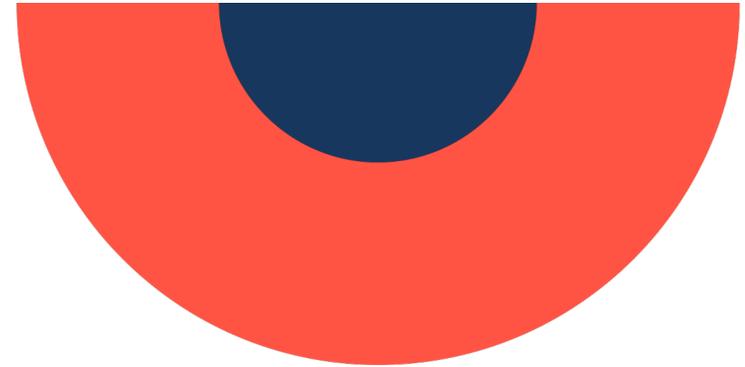
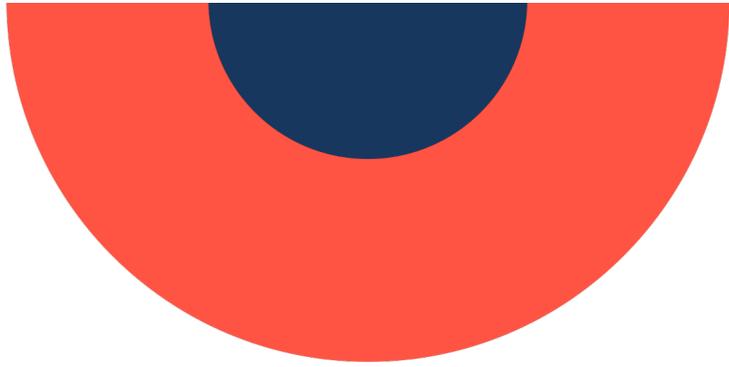
- WHAT WEAR?
- WHERE SOCKS?
- IT CLEAN?
- WHERE FAVORITE?
- WHY NOT PAJAMAS?

Getting dressed is an everyday activity. It actually happens a couple times a day! There's a lot to talk about, so lots of opportunities to model AAC! Make it playful and use language to connect with your AAC learner.



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Reflect:

What school or home routine do you see yourself modeling language the most?

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

Each individual's AAC system should represent themselves.

Multiple Languages

- Children with complex communication needs can still learn multiple languages!
- Switch between languages on device
- Include meaningful, family-specific words

Year of Core Words – 40 Spanish Words in 4 Months

Month 1	Month 2	Month 3	Month 4
Again – <i>otra vez</i>	Eat – <i>comer</i>	Away	Big – <i>grande</i>
All done – (<i>no más</i>)	Get	Bad - <i>mal</i>	Busy
Different - <i>diferente</i>	Go – <i>vamos</i>	Come – <i>ven</i>	Do
Help – <i>ayuda</i>	Happy – <i>feliz</i>	Good – <i>bueno</i>	Drink – <i>beber</i>
Mine – <i>mio</i>	Here – <i>aquí</i>	It - <i>lo</i>	Feel - <i>sentir</i>
More – <i>más</i>	I/me – <i>me</i>	Make – <i>hacer</i>	He – <i>Él</i>
Not/don't – <i>no</i>	Like - <i>gusta</i>	Now – <i>ahora</i>	In
Stop – <i>parar</i>	On	Off	Make - <i>hacer</i>
That - <i>eso</i>	Play - <i>jugar</i>	Read – <i>leer</i>	Out
Want – <i>quiero, quieres</i>	Put	There – <i>allá</i>	Some – <i>poco</i>
What – <i>Qué</i>	This - <i>esto</i>	Thing – <i>cosa</i>	Tell – <i>di</i>
You – <i>tú</i>	(Give) – <i>da</i>	Where – <i>dónde</i> (Where) <i>adónde</i>	Who – <i>quién</i>
	(Tell) - <i>di</i>	(Look) - <i>mira</i>	



Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

Each individual's AAC system should represent themselves.

Traditional Chinese Translation

什麼	什麼時候	哪裏	ABC 123	人物	問題	動作	社交	地方	時間	種類	形容
我	他/她	怎麼樣	誰	為什麼	再一次	請	謝謝	問題	現在	好/不好	好/壞/不壞
我的	是			感覺	給	聽	開心/高興	傷心	累	好/OK	很難/cool
這/這個	在	會/將會	來	痛/受傷	聽	知道	那/那個	一/一個		和	多一點/滿
你	可以	吃	喝	完/結束	拿	愛	做	需要	全部/所有	在	一點/一些
你的	做	去	幫忙	開/打開	放/擺	說/講	看	先/首先	然後		開
這/這裏	有	喜歡	玩	讀	停	走	給...看	等一下	進/裡	上	關
是/對/好	不/不行	要/想	拿	講/告訴	轉/轉流	看	穿	工作/上課	出/外	下	跟

TRADITIONAL CHINESE TRANSLATION, BY SHIRLEY FENG; SALTILLO

WordPower60 Español Básico

qué	cómo	dónde	ABC 123	GENTE	ACCIONES	FRASES	LUGAR	TIEMPO	GRUPOS	DESCRIB	muy mucho
cuándo	quién	por qué	por favor	gracias	un	lo	eso	hoy	ahora	mal(o)	bien
abrir	yo	mi	que	a	el	la	problema	okay	cansado	feliz	triste
conseguir	él	hacer	hablar	me	gusta	encanta	duele	siento	todo	y	más
necesitar	ella	es	ayudar	te	llevo	mostrar	pensar	dar	de	en	poco
allí	ellos	estoy	comer	beber	decir	escuchar	terminar	saber	para	por	porque
aquí	nosotros	puedo	ir / voy	jugar	leer	parar	poner	trabajar	dentro	arriba	con
sí	tú	no	quiero	tengo	tomar	venir	ver/mirar	esperar	fuera	abajo	ya

SALTILLO

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

Each individual's AAC system should represent themselves.

Representation

- Skin Tones
- Gender
 - Pronouns
- Voice
 - VocalID
 - Acapela Group



What do I do when...

I can't find a word

- Talk it out
- Word Finder
- Spell
- Synonyms

I forgot the system, or it isn't working

- Troubleshoot
- Have a back-up
 - Low Tech
 - Partner Assisted Communication

My child/student hits the same buttons over & over

- Babbling is okay & expected
- Respond
 - Add meaning
 - Clarify

What do I do when...

JFK PARTNERS - UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO - ANSCHUTZ MEDICAL CAMPUS

"But my student doesn't look when I'm modelling"

Remember paying attention looks different for different people



Paying attention and AAC

Looking and Listening

Some people struggle to look and listen at the same time. So, in order to listen to what you are saying, they have to look away.



Paying attention and sitting still

Some people struggle to pay attention while they are sitting still – so they have to move while they are listening.



And.....sometimes they aren't paying attention!



Paying attention and learning to model AAC

In the beginning, when we are just learning to model AAC, we need to remember that right at the very beginning of the process it's all about you learning the system anyway – so it doesn't really matter if your person is engaged or not until you are a confident user of that AAC system.

Paying attention and moving away

Some people are paying attention but then they have to move away and take time to process what you've said



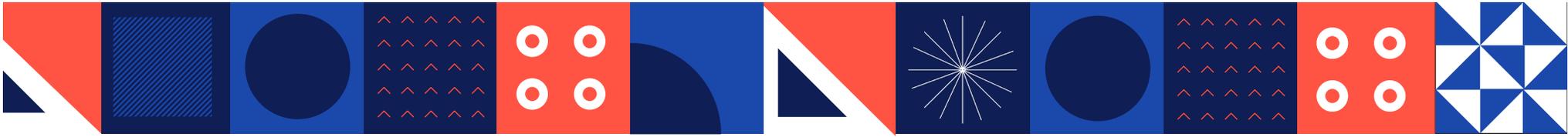
Tracey Campbell, Rett UK Conference 2020



AAC Users' Perspectives

- Be respectful
- "Give me time"
- LISTEN and focus on being responsive
- Honor all forms of communication
- Teach AAC users about the mechanics of their device
- Individuals who can speak may still need access to AAC, particularly in highly stressful situations
- Speech isn't the goal, communication is

Thank you to the many AAC users for sharing their advice, thoughts, and perspectives.



AAC RESOURCES

SWAAAC

Statewide Assistive Technology,
Augmentative and Alternative
Communication

Website: <http://www.swaaac.org>

CIDE

Center for Inclusive Design and
Engineering at CU Denver

Website:
[https://www1.ucdenver.edu/centers/
center-for-inclusive-design-and-
engineering](https://www1.ucdenver.edu/centers/center-for-inclusive-design-and-engineering)

Adult AAC Users

Reach out to experienced
AAC users for their
opinions and perspectives
about AAC.

AssistiveWare Core Word Classroom

Resources for AAC implementation
ranging from printable core word
displays to planners for teaching core
words during common activities

Website: <https://coreword.assistiveware.com>

Company Representatives

If you have a high-tech device,
reach out to the company
representatives for your child's
device.

PRC-Salttillo, Tobii-DynaVox,
Lingraphica, Attainment, AbleNet

PrAACTical AAC

Blog created by two SLPs to
improve the level of AAC
services available to individuals
with significant
communication challenges

Website: <https://praacticalaac.org/>

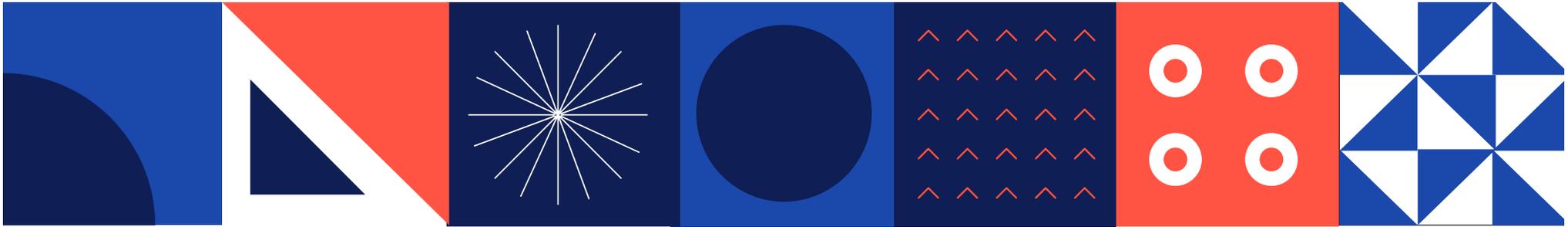
Hablo con CAA

Spanish-speaking family's
stories, advice, and
experiences with AAC.

Website:
[https://habloconcaa.wordpress.
com](https://habloconcaa.wordpress.com)

Scan for Padlet





TAKE HOME POINTS

Model, Model, Model

Model **without expectations** and to **connect**.

Slow down

Take the **time** to let your child/student process & respond.

Follow your child or student's lead

Your child/student may be communicating more than you realize. Let them know they are **heard** and **understood**.

Have fun!

Build **connections** and **enjoy** the interactions you have with your child or student.

Acknowledgments

Graciously Peer Reviewed by:

Dr. Filip Loncke, University of Virginia

Maureen Castillo, Adams 12 Five Star Schools

JFK Partners, University of Colorado Anschutz - SLP Department



JFK Partners

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO
ANSCHUTZ MEDICAL CAMPUS

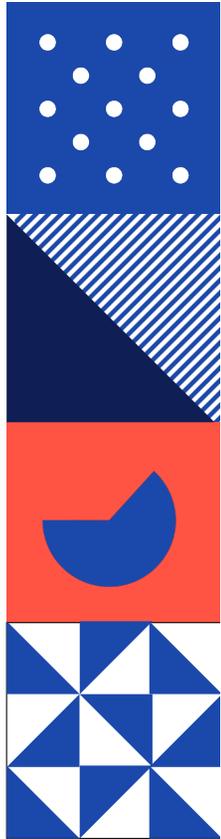
Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental Disabilities (LEND), Award T73MC11044, from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). The content is solely the responsibility of the authors and does not necessarily represent the official view of, nor an endorsement by HRSA, HHS, or the U.S. Government.



Thank you!

Questions?

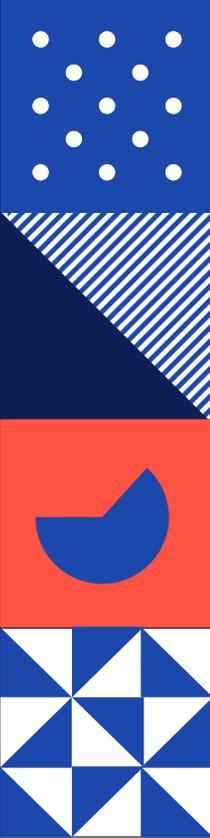
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