

Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC)

What is AAC?

AAC is all forms of communication other than oral that are used to express needs, wants, thoughts and ideas. We all use AAC when we use facial expressions, gestures, symbols, pictures and writing.

Who uses AAC?

Children/adults who do not have sufficient oral language to meet their communication needs and require an alternative way to have their needs known.

Language Development:

Typical developing children hear 4000-6000 words per day for a year before they say their first word. Then they hear 4000-6000 words per day for another year before they put two words together. Children who use AAC do not see or hear people using AAC at the same rate as typical developing children. It is important to model language for people using AAC. Modeling helps children know what is expected of them.

Functions of Communication:

request	protest	comment	negotiate	express feelings	joke
greetings	name	acknowledge	share	ask questions	opinion



To encourage AAC use:

- Have the device available and charged everyday
- Let the child explore their language (remember this is their voice and they are probably excited to experiment with it)
- Ask open ended questions
- Give wait time (an expectant pause)
- MODEL, MODEL, MODEL (explain your thought process as you navigate through pages)
- Focus on key words (it does not have to be grammatically correct)
- Acknowledge all communication attempts & CELEBRATE!