

# ASSESS FOR SUCCESS:

## When to Refer A Child for an AAC Assessment

### What is Augmentative and Alternative Communication?

Using tools or strategies that are designed to either support or replace spoken communication

All AAC is not just "high tech;" it comes in many forms, such as gesture, facial expressions, manual signs, communication boards, etc.



<http://aac-lerc.psu.edu/index.php/pages/show/id/46>

A wide variety of characteristics can be warning signs for the need of an AAC assessment.

### Refer for an AAC Assessment if the Child...

- Has unintelligible (unclear) speech that can only be understood by some people
- Is unable to participate in activities that same age peers can due to communication problems
- Is unable to clarify during conversation when someone doesn't understand him or her
- Has behavioral issues resulting from frustration in communication (e.g., tantrums, self-injury, withdrawal)
- Has a pre-existing diagnosis of autism, childhood apraxia of speech, Down Syndrome, cerebral palsy, or other motor-speech disorder
- Has communication needs that he or she can't meet by speaking
- Has family members who are concerned about his or her speech abilities (e.g., they notice their child communicates differently than peers).

***If you're unsure, talk to your school's speech-language pathologist.***

### Keep in Mind...

Just because a child has some functional speech does not mean he/she couldn't benefit from AAC!



-AAC is not "giving up" on development of natural speech. Research has indicated that AAC does not inhibit natural speech and can in fact facilitate its development (Miller, Light, & Schlosser, 2006)

-The "wait and see" strategy is never the best strategy. AAC should be introduced as early as possible to support the development of language comprehension and production. (Cress & Marvin, 2003)