
AN INVITATION TO COMMUNICATION

WHAT IS AUGMENTATIVE & ALTERNATIVE COMMUNICATION?

Augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) is any form of communication used to supplement speech.

AAC can include :

- *Gestures and facial expressions
- *iPads with communication apps
- *Sign language
- *Speech-generating devices
- *Photographs and line drawings
- *Communication books and wallets



Photo courtesy of the Center for Communication Enhancement, Children's Hospital Boston (an AAC-RERC partner)

A child uses AAC to choose her lunch.

WHO CAN BENEFIT FROM AAC?

Children with a wide variety of disabilities can benefit from AAC, including children with:

- *Cerebral Palsy
- *Autism Spectrum Disorder
- *Developmental Language Delay
- *Traumatic Brain Injury
- *Motor Speech Disorders (e.g. Apraxia and Dysarthria)
- *Syndromes: Down, Fragile X, Prader-Willi, Rett, and Angelman
- *Congenital deafness
- *Children with undiagnosed communication difficulties

WHEN AND WHERE CAN MY STUDENT USE AAC?

- *In the classroom
- *On the playground
- *At home
- *In the community
- *Everywhere any other child communicates!

FOR MORE INFORMATION CHECK OUT:

[What Every Speech-Language Pathologist/Audiologist Should Know About Augmentative & Alternative Communication](#), by Cathy Binger & Jennifer Kent-Walsh

The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association's AAC page <http://www.asha.org/public/speech/disorders/AAC/>

Communication Services and Supports for Individuals With Severe Disabilities: FAQs Basic Information About Augmentative and Alternative Communication <http://www.asha.org/NJC/faqs-aac-basics.htm>

The International Society for Augmentative and Alternative Communication <http://www.isaac-online.org/english/home/>

The AAC Institute <http://www.aac institute.org>

WHY DOES MY STUDENT NEED AAC?

- *To express what they want and need
- *To talk about their day
- *To share stories
- *To show respect and compassion for others



<https://www.speechbuddy.com/blog/speech-therapy-techniques/using-augmentative-and-alternative-communication-aac-devices/>

Children use speech-generating devices to communicate during play.

WHAT WILL MY STUDENT GAIN FROM USING AAC?

- *Access to classroom curriculum
- *Engaging with peers
- *Participation in all classroom activities



<http://www.acts-at.com/associates.htm>

Students use speech-generating devices during classroom activities.

HOW DO I KNOW IF AAC IS RIGHT FOR MY STUDENT?

- *When a student has difficulty talking and this interferes with academics, peer engagement, and development of oral language, AAC may help.

HOW CAN AAC HELP MY STUDENTS?

- *AAC can help students communicate in a wide range of situations.
- *AAC fosters language development and allows students to participate in learning, and to communicate with others.

If you suspect your student may need AAC contact your district's Assistive Technology team.



<http://carriesspeechcorner.blogspot.com/2013/06/aac-week-speech-and-language-therapy.html>

A teacher uses gaze board with a student.



<http://www.donaldsons.org.uk/how-to-apply.aspx>

A student uses AAC to communicate with his teacher.



<http://www.techlearning.com/curriculum/0035/miracle-workers/42577>

A student uses AAC to complete an assignment.



<http://aac.computing.dundee.ac.uk/>

A child uses head switches to select items on her speech-generating device.