



Acceptance

in

Action

- Family ▪ Classroom
- Workplace ▪ Public Spaces

**AAC: Using Early Communication
tools for non-verbal children on the
spectrum**

By

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What is AAC?



What Does AAC Stand For?

Augmentative

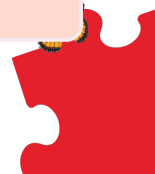
Any
communication
that adds to a
student's speech

Alternative

Anything that
is used to
communicate
besides speech

Communication

The ability to
exchange
thoughts and
ideas



AAC

AAC includes all forms of communication, other than oral speech, that is used to express thoughts, needs, wants, and ideas.



Types of AAC Tools

No-tech



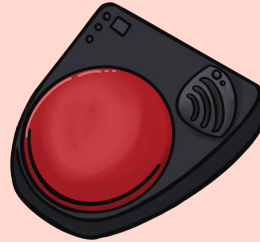
Using gestures,
sign language,
writing, or
drawing

Low-tech



Pointing to
pictures on a
communication
board or paper
picture board

Mid-tech



Simple
battery-operated
button devices
with pre-recorded
words.

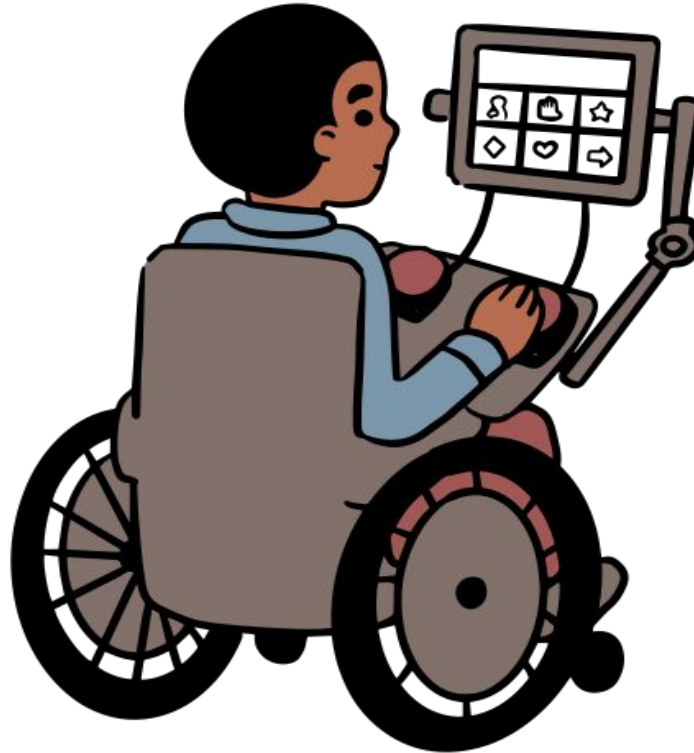
High-tech



Tablets and
electronic
speech-generating
devices with
dynamic symbol
vocabularies.



Supporting AAC Users



CORE THERAPY TECHNIQUES

Presume Competence

- Always presume the student is capable of understanding and learning. This encourages them to reach their full potential.
- Treat all forms of communication with respect, whether they come from speech, gestures, or an AAC device.
- Your student has valuable ideas and thoughts to share. Be patient and wait for them to respond.



CORE THERAPY TECHNIQUES

Keep AAC Devices Ready

- Ensure the AAC device is always charged and in good working condition.
- The student should carry their device or have access to it throughout the day.
- The device should be ready during transitions, specials (like gym and art), and playtime.



CORE THERAPY TECHNIQUES

Foster a Supportive Environment

- Emphasize that AAC is a tool for communication, just like talking or writing.
- Ensure the student has opportunities to use their AAC device in all classroom activities.
- Ask open-ended questions and give them time to respond.



CORE THERAPY TECHNIQUES

Model Language on the AAC Device

- Consistently use AAC during classroom lessons and activities.
- Model language without any expectations. The student will use the AAC device when they are ready.
- Use visual schedules, core boards, and other aids to support communication throughout the day.



CORE THERAPY TECHNIQUES

Core Vocabulary Focus:

- Teaching a small set of frequent, versatile words (like "want", "go", or "more") that apply to many daily situations.
- Model language without any expectations. The student will use the AAC device when they are ready.
- Use visual schedules, core boards, and other aids to support communication throughout the day.



Myth or Fact?

If a student is able to speak orally, they don't need to use AAC.



Myth!

AAC can augment speech for individuals who speak orally but have difficulty being understood.



Myth or Fact?

There are no prerequisites
to introduce AAC.



Fact!

AAC can support communication development from a very young age. Children learn language through exposure and interaction. No prerequisite skills are necessary.



Myth or Fact?

Students need to show they
are ready to use an AAC
device.



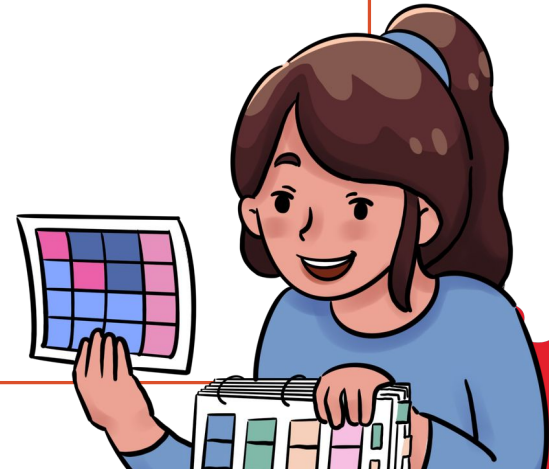
Myth!

We should always presume competence
and recognize a student's potential.



Myth or Fact?

High-tech AAC is not
always better.



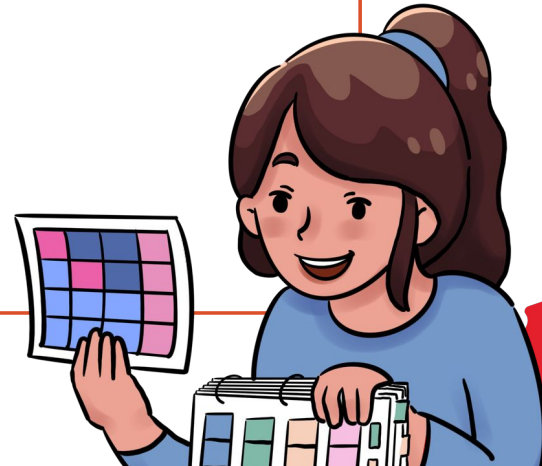
Fact!

Both low-tech and high-tech AAC systems can help students communicate. The best choice depends on the student's needs.



Myth or Fact?

It is likely that an individual will stop using an AAC device even though one is still needed



Fact!

Abandonment occurs in approximately one third of cases even if the system is well designed and functional



