

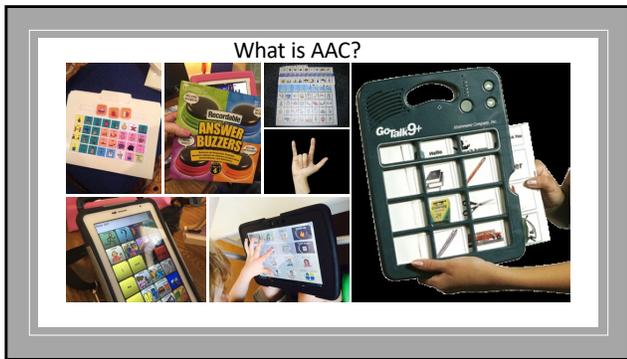
Getting Started: Finding the Why of AAC in the Classroom

Guiding Questions & Planning Guide



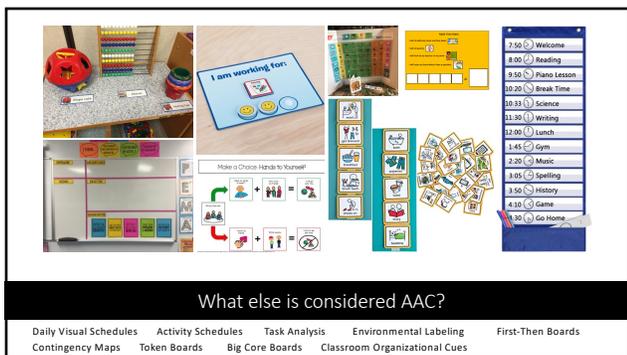
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List some of the AAC supports you have in your classroom.



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Now, list AAC supports you may not have thought about!



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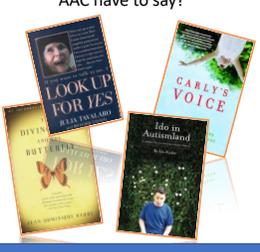
How could the above AAC supports help students in your classroom?

Purposes of AAC

- Augmenting existing natural speech
- Providing primary output mode for communication
- Providing input and output mode for language and communication
- Language intervention strategy

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What do people who use AAC have to say?



How about our governing bodies?

Joint Commission of the Dept. of Education and the Department of Justice

Public schools must "ensure that communication with students with hearing, vision, or speech disabilities is as effective as communication with all other students."

IDEA, Title II & Section 504; National Joint Committee on the Communication Needs of Individuals with Severe Disabilities (NJC)

Why is AAC important?

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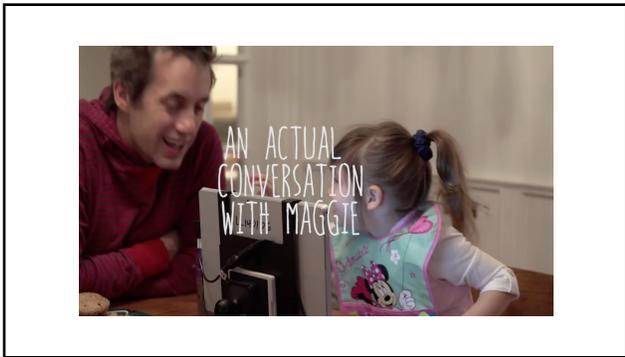
CBS. 60 Minutes: *Breaking the Silence, One Woman's Drive To Teach Her Autistic Son* (Video file). (2003, July 14). Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nfiap3a7Tuo&t=23s>

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Tito Mukhopadhyay, Author

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Krista Howard
AAC Mentor

Why do I do what I do?
I want to change the world. I like to help people. I don't want people to go through what I have been through when I was young. I didn't want to communicate when I was younger because I didn't have models (people modeling AAC) and friends. I have a passion to do what I do. When I am able to see the successes of AAC users, I feel happy. When I go to conferences, it motivates me to practice and model better.

How do I spend my free time...
Spending time with my 10-year-old son is one way I enjoy my free time. We like playing games, swimming, and watching shows together. I join Out and About and AZ Talks Together as a volunteer to get experience until they raise more money. I like to hang out with friends. I like to get pedicures. I love caramel frappes from Starbucks.

Why should you get in contact with me/how can I help you...
You can hire me to model AAC in your sessions. Tell me what your student's favorite things are so we can talk about it. I can show everybody how to make sentences with AAC. I also model for SLPs and SLP students who want to learn about AAC.

<https://www.wespeakaac.com/krista-howard.html>

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What Can We Do?

- Look at our students critically..
- Are they communicating like their peers?
- Could they communicate MORE like their peers?
- HOW?

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Are there any students in your classroom who may benefit from additional AAC supports?

What are we doing?

“A potential misalignment exists between clinician perceptions of the need for AAC and actual need.”



McFadd ED, Hustad KC. Communication Modes and Functions in Children With Cerebral Palsy

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AAC Myths vs. Research

Common AAC myths tell us...

- You should wait for a student to develop speech before introducing AAC.
- AAC is only for student who are non-speaking.
- Speech is the only acceptable form of communication.
- AAC will reduce the likelihood that speech will develop.

Research says...

- Waiting for speech means that students can go YEARS without a means to communicate, negatively impacting language and cognitive development.
- Augmentative communication is used to supplement speech, to clarify and increase effectiveness of speech.
- All people are multimodal communicators!
- AAC supports the development of speech!

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Without a means to effectively communicate, students have...

- limited access to comprehensive communication and language development
- limited access to independence
- limited development of social regulation and relationships
- limited access to academic instruction

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What does the CEC say about teacher AAC competencies?

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Who is responsible for helping our students understand and express themselves in the classroom?

"Special educators who are well-prepared and feel supported are more likely to stay in the field long-term (Gersten, Keating, Yovanof, & Harniss, 2001)"

"By enhancing the skillsets of pre- and in-service special education teachers and other professionals, it is reasonable to expect that the communication skills of their students will further develop."

"By embedding the use of AAC strategies during classroom routines and activities, special education teachers can exemplify the competencies needed to effectively address the communication needs of all students."

Da Fonte, M. A., & Boesch, M. C. (2016). Recommended augmentative and alternative communication competencies for special education teachers. *Journal of International Special Needs Education*, 19(2), 47-58.

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Which one of these competencies are you interested in? Visit our Training pages to find more short training videos and materials to match your needs!

Recommended augmentative and alternative communication competencies for special education teachers	Communication Development & Competencies
	Teamwork & Collaborative Practices
	Role & Functions of AAC Systems
	AAC Instructional Strategies

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