

# AAC Basics

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# Successful AAC Systems will help individuals .....

- Exercise control of their lives
- Develop independence
- Interact with others and express their wishes
- Become productive, active members of society

# Planning for AAC

- AAC Team
- Team Leader
- The Plan

# AAC Assessment

What are the student's communication needs?

How effective is the student's current communication interactions and participation?

What are the student's communication environments, routines, and communication opportunities?

# AAC Assessment

Who will he or she communicate with?

What is the student's educational and literacy abilities?

What are the student's interests, likes, dislikes?

What are the student's physical capabilities?

# Presymbolic - Symbolic Resources

ESC13 - Books and Video

“Every Move Counts”

“First Things First”

Pre- intentional Communication

Intentional Communication

Symbolic Communication

# Pre-Intentional Communication

- Child does not understand if he does something specific around another person that person may do something specific in return.
- Parents are able to figure out the child's state of comfort (hungry, sleepy)
- Adults will assign meaning to the communication attempt

# How can we help?

- Assign meaning to the communication attempt and tell the child the meaning.  
“Oh, I see you are sleepy because you are rubbing your eyes. Put the the child to bed.”



# Intentional Communication

- Child produces behavior with the intent of communicating something to someone however he uses pre-symbolic behaviors. (gestures, body movements, vocalizations)
- Initially will use non-conventional behaviors that will gradually be replaced by conventional behaviors.

Resource - ESC13 - “Tangible Symbol Systems”

# How can we help?

- Identify the existing behavior and shape it towards a conventional behavior.
- General gesture to pointing
- Head movement to nod

# Symbolic Communication

- Child uses abstract symbols to communicate.
  - Spoken and printed words

Are abstract because they have no physical similarity to their referent.

# Assessment is Key!

- Research has shown most individuals without pre-symbolic communication are not ready to acquire any sort of meaningful symbolic communication.

(Rowland and Schweigert, 2000b)

# How can we help?

- Introduce tangible symbols that share obvious physical connection to what they represent.

picture symbols

three-dimensional symbols

# AAC Assessment is ongoing

- Extended trials with several strategies or technical devices
- Device or system will need to be updated as student progresses or changes
- Student input and response to changes is essential

# Model AAC Use

Staff **MUST** model using the AAC system

# AAC Evaluation

## Process and Guiding Questions

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# Hierarchy for AAC/No Tech

SKILL LEVEL	NO TECH
Object symbols	Object calendar
Photos/line drawings	Choice Boards/wallet Symbol exchange system
Up to 50 symbols	Communication Books Activity Pages People/verb/noun pages
Up to 500 symbols	Communication Books People/verbs/noun/adj/comments/ Introduce Core Vocabulary Page
1000 symbols + Early Literacy	Communication Books Core Vocabulary + Fringe Voc
Literate	Communication Book Words/picture/ABC page Core Vocabulary + Fringe Voc

# Communication Book Access

Direct Select

Limited Physical Access

Partner Assisted Scanning

# Hierarchy for AAC/technology

SKILL LEVEL	TECHNOLOGY
Object symbols	
Photos/line drawings	Single message (static)
Up to 50 symbols	Multiple messages (static)
Up to 500 symbols	Multilevel (static)
1000 symbols +	Dynamic Screen
Early Literacy	Picture Word Power Gateway / Minspeak (dynamic)
Literate	Text to speech Word prediction

# Static to Dynamic

Consider overlays that will help a student develop skills needed for a dynamic system.

Big Mac - “That’s it. “ “That’s the one I want”

Core Words in similar location as Dynamic device

# What is Dynamic Display?

Display change upon selection

Access to large set of vocabulary

Core Voc - Reusable

Fringe Vocabulary to supplement - Specific

Vocabulary to function in various environments,  
pragmatic needs and functions

Organized method page sets

# Consider Access Needs for AAC Technology

# High End Dynamic Device Trials Protocol

- Ask student to create at least 3 sentences for you with the food page
- Note if student requires less prompting of icon location to access vocabulary
- Try main page with links to other pages
- Adult model “I go school.”
- Ask student to tell a sentence of where they like to go.

# Device Trial

- Note again how much prompting student requires to find vocabulary
- Describe pictures or books using the device
- Adult - model Clear Function Key to clear message each time
- Adult - model Master Page Function Key



# Device Trial Sessions

1. 30 minute session
2. Begin with a greeting on the device
3. Plan an activity to target the location of core vocabulary
4. Gail Van Tatenhove - Pixon Manual  
(She recommends working on certain words together.)

# Device Trial Sessions

5. SLP model and explain thinking process to locate target vocabulary
6. Encourage use of Function Keys during activity
7. End the session with Free Speech Time

# Teaching with Core Language

## Referential Teaching

What is .....?      Where did .....?

## Descriptive Teaching

Why did .....?      How did .....?

(descriptive answers requires the AAC user to use his core vocabulary)

# Vocabulary Organization

- Visual Scenes
- Phrase Based
- Semantic Category
- Grammatical Category
- Icon Sequencing
- Text/Typing Based Systems

# AAC Therapy is Language Therapy

Expectant Wait

Time Delay

Sabotage

# Materials used for Trials

- Books with target voc.
- Scripted activity to target voc: art, craft, or language activity
- BUILD Book from Prentke Romich
- Pre-teach an activity that will happen in the classroom
- Calendar, art, group sharing

# Plan how the AAC system will be used in the Classroom

1. Classroom teacher must be involved with planning and brainstorming
2. Begin with one activity
3. SLP or AT Team Leader - Model use of target vocabulary and device to staff
4. SLP or AT Team Leader - observe student and staff using device periodically

# AAC Device Plans