AAC Implementation: A Collaborative Approach to Improving Communication

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My client has a device…
What do I do now?

• Training with device through DDD or company representative
• Locate company/device information
  • tech support information, website, resources
• Consider care plan and make adjustments
• Talk to parents about goals
• Get in contact with other team members
Emergent Communicator

- First exposure to device
- Any age
- Typically start at the “They said it, they get it” stage
- More phrase based
- Caregiver/User balance
- Building up to using across the day/settings
- High repetition
- Quick reinforcement
Emergent Communicator

Check out this video…
# May 2019 AAC Calendar for Emergent Communicators

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<tr>
<th>Sunday</th>
<th>Monday</th>
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<td>ACTION</td>
<td>DESCRIPTOR</td>
<td>SOCIAL</td>
<td>NOUN GROUPS</td>
<td>QUESTION</td>
<td>PLACE</td>
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<td>Instructions: For each day, the focus is on the MODELING, WITHOUT EXPECTATION. Talk TO your child without expecting responses.</td>
<td>...Our goal is exposure and experience, not mastery. Model the words that are underlined each day.</td>
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<td>ACTIVITY: GROSS MOTOR/OUTDOOR PLAY</td>
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Core Words

- growing research base
- flexible, generalizable
- “core” of a sentence
- target at 80% core / 20% fringe
- core contrasts
GO

**Model when...**
- You turn ON any toy with an on/off switch
- After you say, “Ready, set. . . . ”
- Pair it with movement! (e.g., Helping child up: pushing stroller/wheelchair; racing; transitioning: getting in the car)
- Play with vehicles, wind up toys, toys that come to a stop.
- Telling others (e.g., siblings) to “GO” AWAY
- Model as part of a song (e.g., How Far I’ll GO- Moana.) Use pauses.

**Keep in Mind...**
- Provide immediate responses to your child saying, “GO” when they are just starting out: exaggeration is good!
- Make it multi-sensory: engage the whole body:
  - FEEL “GO” (shaking, swaying, pushing, jumping)
  - SEE “GO” (flying, shooting, continuation of video)
  - HEAR “GO” (provide verbal feedback of you saying “GO”!, music, sound effects, cheers, comments)

**Always keep in mind what you know about YOUR child’s sensory system, movement abilities, and likes/dislikes.

STOP

**Model when...**
- You turn OFF any toy with an on/off switch
- Proceed with counting down.. “3–2–1.. andddd . . . STOP!”
- After you’ve started movement (e.g., jumping, shaking, tickling, squeezes, etc), model STOP and then freeze.
- Model when an activity comes to an end
- Protesting, or saying “no” to others/activities: “STOP”
- Model as part of a song (e.g., Can’t STOP the Feeling–Trolls)

**Keep in Mind...**
- Provide immediate responses to your child saying, “STOP” when they are just starting out: exaggeration is good!
- Make it multi-sensory: engage the whole body:
  - FEEL “STOP” (sudden stopping of movement)
  - SEE “STOP” (crashing, people freezing, video pausing)
  - HEAR “STOP” (provide verbal feedback of you saying “STOP”!, music ending, comments to expand “Stop it! I don’t want to.”)

**Always keep in mind what you know about YOUR child’s sensory system, movement abilities, and likes/dislikes.

TIPS: (1) Always respond to your child’s communication in a natural way. (2) Model WITHOUT expecting them to say anything. (3) Exchange words like “Show me” and “Where is..” with “Tell me!”. This is Communication; not a test.

....READY FOR A THIRD WORD??? TRY ADDING “WAIT” AS YOUR THIRD OPTION!
Modeling Aided Language Stimulation

- Model key words without expectation of use
  
  *Let’s GO PLAY CAR in your room!*

- Prompting

- Provide 200 opportunities a day

- User needs to be exposed to symbol at least 150 times to learn it

- Learning through play!
Routines

• Greetings with others

• Give parent ideas on how to use core words in daily routines: BEDTIME, MEALS, DRESSING

• External routine creates cue for device/modeling

Get device from charger!

Clean up pillows, books, etc.

Make Bed

Change clothes/diaper
Hide Mode

- Helps with access
- Teaching technique
- Errorless learning
- Not to be used to restrict what the user can say
- Progressive Language, Vocabulary Builder, Hide Mode
Specific Interests

Move beyond, “I want..THOMAS”
Use device structure to help expand...

28 vocabulary targets for 1 activity…and that’s not even an exhausted list.
Is my client ready to advance?

- Toggle between 2 vocabulary systems
- Am I running out of things to model?
- The client refusing to use the device
- Consider the 5-year plan
Intermediate-Advanced Users

- Communication is beyond requesting
- Moving from programmed, phrase-based communication to independent phrases and sentences
- User has ~42 or more buttons per page
- Spontaneous Novel Utterance Generation (SNUG)
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<td>School-Home</td>
<td>It's May! It's almost summertime! Go to TIME and talk about MAY and SUMMER.</td>
<td>Start a school countdown. Go to your NUMBERS page and count the days left of school.</td>
<td>What will we DO this weekend? Use ACTIONS: PLAY? WATCH? GO? EAT?</td>
<td>Have you brought your talker to a restaurant yet? Today would be a great day to try PLACES-RESTAURANTS.</td>
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<td>CORE WORD OF THE WEEK: TAKE</td>
<td>Unpack the backpack. TAKE OUT each item and model TAKE.</td>
<td>Do you always need to bring a toy/item for car rides? Model, TAKE-bunny or TAKE-iPad. WHAT do we TAKE with us?</td>
<td>Prepping for dinner? or snack? What do we need to TAKE out of the fridge? Model just TAKE or model TAKE- GRAPES. TAKE- NUGGETS.</td>
<td>Is your child trying to give you items to hold? Model for them-“TAKE-IT” while verbally saying, “Ohh, you want me to TAKE IT?”</td>
<td>Incorporate a little literacy! Can you spell TAKE on your keyboard? Find the first letter/sound with the Phonics page? T for TAKE! Like T for Thomas!</td>
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<td>CORE WORD OF THE WEEK: FUNNY</td>
<td>Watch a silly animal video on youtube! Cats being FUNNY, dogs being FUNNY.</td>
<td>Go to the JOKES page and tell some jokes. Go back to describe to model FUNNY or NOT FUNNY! Take a vote!</td>
<td>Model social language that is similar to the word FUNNY. Silly, Laugh, haha, crazy, “LOL” etc</td>
<td>Do you have social comments programmed? “That’s FUNNY!” “HAHA!” “Hilarious!” “Awesome!”</td>
<td>Family activity! Have everyone take turns making FUNNY faces. Model FUNNY and point to who is next!</td>
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<td>CORE WORD OF THE WEEK: MAKE</td>
<td>School-Home Connection: Find a word in the device that relates to one academic activity completed at school today.</td>
<td>PHONICS: Find your Phonics page and Model the “mmm” sound for “MAKE”. Talk about other “mmm” sounds: MOM. ME. MORE.</td>
<td>Let’s MAKE a snack. What will we MAKE? Model before you decide and while you are MAKING it!</td>
<td>Find rhyming words for MAKE! CAKE- TAKE-RAKE- FAKE- LAKE-BAKE- SNAKE- WAKE-SHAKE</td>
<td>Model who is going to MAKE part of a craft: I-MAKE YOU-MAKE BROTHER-MAKE</td>
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<td>CORE WORD OF THE WEEK: WE</td>
<td>Take pictures of your child and 1 other person doing things. Model, WE + PLAY or WE + DANCE.</td>
<td>Who wants goldfish? WE DO! Who wants ice cream? WE DO!</td>
<td>Sight Word Video today: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dj8Lnp2S7z8">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dj8Lnp2S7z8</a></td>
<td>Talk about who WE are! “WE are friends” “WE are kids.” “WE are family.”</td>
<td>Where are WE going to GO today? “WE go…”</td>
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Language Techniques

Expansion

Backward Chaining:

Doesn’t vary much from regular speech and language therapy with a verbally developing child.
Language Techniques

• Modeling navigation to appropriate category as you ask questions/provide prompt

• Setting them up for success

• Natural responses instead of “no, that’s not it”

Therapist: “Who is going to play with us?”
Language Techniques

Check out this video…
“Church”
Language Techniques…

• Make it meaningful!
Visual Strategies

- Hide Mode- Motor plan
- border highlight of the target word
- bright body color
- Contrasting colors
Core Words

• Continue to expand the core vocabulary: “dinosaur” “mickey mouse” and “goldfish” only get us so far…

• Core + Fringe (80%/20%)

• Building phrases/sentences.

• Core Word of the Week: songs, trace/write, predictive writing, shared reading, sight words
Predictive Writing
Core Word/Sight Word
Age appropriate song/video
highlighted button

1. Is pretty? GRANDMA
2. Is loud? JEFF
3. Is funny? HANNAH and KATE
4. Is slow? GRANDPA
Literacy

- True autonomous communication = literacy
- A-Z functions in WordPower
- Phonics Keyboards
- Sight Word Keyboards
- Word Prediction
- Identify initial letters
- Tracing/Writing core words
- Predictive writing
Check out this video: “Literacy-MAKE(1)”

Check out this video: “Literacy-MAKE(2)”
Literacy

Check out this video: “Sight Word Slap-It”
Team Approach

• Necessary to provide the support the client needs

• Communication happens everywhere!

• Helps increase generalization

• Leads to better progress

• No one “approach” is the best; the end goal for everyone is the same: To help the child make progress
Team Members

- Client!
- Parent-Caregiver
- Occupational Therapist
- BCBA/ABA
- Physical Therapist
- Teacher/Aide
- Others
Creative Communication
With The Team

• Realize Language
• Weekly emails to parent/team
• Videos
• Team members goals
• “home news”, “school news”, “therapy news”
Creative Communication
With The Team

Check out this video:
“Video Text Navigation”
Creative Communication
With The Team

For some of the other vocabulary, here are some good synonym/substitute words that would be great to use to give the flexibility of the language, and are more applicable/functional for his device use.

Change - Different
Energy - Work
Layer - Top/Bottom or Up/Down
Reduce -- More/Less
Reuse - (use) more
Recycle - old/new

For the most part, I believe these are programmed in!
GOALS

• Target all language areas
• Functional/Meet Client’s needs
• Core words
• Navigation
• Easy to Measure
• Achievable
• Competencies
GOALS

CORE VOCABULARY
CLIENT will learn 1 new core word per week and use it x 5 during a session for a total of 12 core words per quarter

FUNCTIONAL MESSAGES/NEEDS
CLIENT will utilize "quick messages" to indicate his sensory needs (e.g., "I need a break. I need a fidget. "I'm thirsty.") etc., 3 times a session with minimal cues.

NAVIGATION
CLIENT will navigate 2+ buttons to acquire desired vocabulary (request/comment/action, etc). 10 times in a session independently.
Resources

Practical AAC
• https://practicalaac.org

TarHeel Reader
• https://tarheelreader.org

Assitiveware
• https://coreword.assistiveware.com/c/core-word-of-the-week

AAC Language Lab (requires subscription)
• https://aaclanguagelab.com

Chat Corner
• https://saltillo.com/chatcorner

Unite For Literacy
• https://www.uniteforliteracy.com

Core Workshop
• https://www.coreworkshop.org

Tobii Dynovax Coreword Starter (requires free account)
• https://www.mytobiidynavox.com

Talking With Tech Podcast

Facebook: AAC for the SLP
References


Practical AAC - [https://praacticalaaac.org](https://praacticalaaac.org)
AAC Language Lab - [https://aaclanguagelab.com](https://aaclanguagelab.com)

Images:

(1) Google Images
(2) Client devices
(3) PCS or SS symbol libraries