



AAC Overview



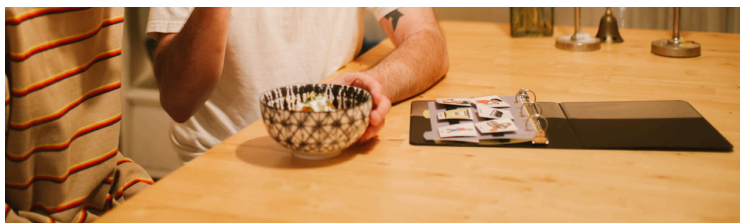
PROJECT ACCESS

DEFINITION

Augmentative or Alternative Communication (AAC) is any device, system, or method that improves the ability of a child with a communication impairment to communicate effectively.

AAC is all of the tools we use to communicate in addition to or instead of verbal speech so most people use AAC every day!

- Texting
- E-mails
- Facial Expressions
- Body Language



TYPES/PURPOSE

In an Educational setting, we are typically talking about these types of AAC devices:

- No tech/unaided systems
- Low Tech/aided systems
 - picture symbol books
 - alphabet boards
 - feelings chart
 - manual LAMP board
- Light Tech/Static systems
 - Cheap talk 8
 - Big mack buttons
- High Tech/ Dynamic display
 - iPad or Accent Devices

EVERYONE Communicates DIFFERENTLY



BENEFITS

- Can improve speech and language development
- Improves quality of work, school, and general life.
- Improve speech skills
- Picture exchanges also has been proven to improve language development of children with autism.
- Reduces the psychological stress of individuals regarding the necessity of speaking and eases speech development process
- Decreased behaviors
- Increases literacy skills
- Improves social skills
- Improves life outcomes!

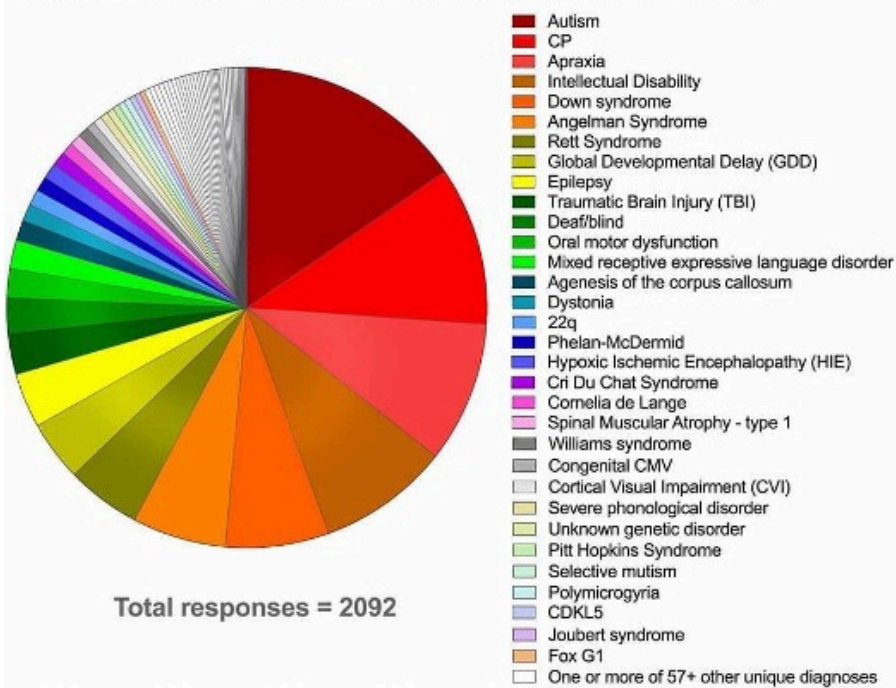


WHO NEEDS AAC?

Anyone who cannot meet their daily needs with spoken language alone would likely benefit from AAC. This includes individuals who need help understanding and have limited language skills.

AAC Users Can Be...

- Verbal
- Partially Verbal
- Non-Verbal
- Typical Motor Coordination
- Complex Motor Coordination
- In-tact Vision
- Vision Deficits
- Word Finding Challenges



ASSESSMENT

AAC should be determined based on student needs and abilities.

- Informal Checklists
- Communication Matrix
- Use loaner device to trial



WHO IS ON THE TEAM?

- Speech Pathologist
- Occupational Therapist
- Physical Therapist
- Special Education Teacher
- Parents/Caregivers
- Student
- Missouri certified evaluator (When parents are using insurance/Medicaid)

REMINDERS

- **This is your student's voice!! It should NEVER be taken away!! It should be used during ALL ACTIVITIES! NOT JUST DURING SPEECH SESSIONS.**
- There are no prerequisites! Any student can learn to use some type of AAC! Presume Competence.
- Each individual student's strengths and weaknesses determine their device, not what the teacher/SLP is comfortable with.
- Research shows AAC does not hinder or delay developing verbal speech! It can increase verbal speech!!
- **EVERY STUDENT DESERVES TO HAVE A VOICE. If your student is not effectively communicating their needs, FIND ONE THAT WORKS FOR THEM!**

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Intro to AAC

AEA Workshop #57

Speech generating Devices

#57

Picture Communication

#28

Obtaining a AAC Device Loaner

#80