



Public Site






Using Augmentative & Alternative Communication (AAC) Devices at Home

Tips for Supporting use of AAC at home

- 1. Tune into the device, interpret and respond** - Take time to be near or with your child when they are using AAC and respond to anything they say using the device. This is how the child learns that what they say has an impact on the world around them. Interpret whatever they say as meaningful and relevant!
- 2. Modelling** - Modelling refers to using the device yourself to show your child how they could share a message, to help them learn their device, and to understand the symbols. In the same way we model language to young children developing communication (think about the words we say to children who are learning to talk 'yummy', 'banana', 'more', 'stop' etc.), children learning to use AAC need the same input. You can provide this input by modelling the words on the device as you say them. Examples of Modelling: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vUY6oQoSTXw>
- 3. Expand Language** - Always stay one step ahead. The idea is that you MATCH what the child has said by saying and modelling the same thing and then you STRETCH it by adding another word, essentially repeating and modelling an expanded version of what the child has said. (E.g. *Child:* "want"
Parent: "want" ... "want more")
- 4. Create Opportunities (communicative temptations)** - One of the easiest and most effective ways to increase device use is by making sure there are opportunities for the child to do so. It's a fairly simple concept – create an environment or scenario in which the student needs or wants to communicate. Some examples include:
 - Open a jar of bubbles, blow some, then close the jar and give it to the child - child can request "more", "open", "help"
 - Give the child a choice - Do you want to read or play?
- 5. Routines** - The reason why routines are so great is because within a routine, usually the same thing happens and similar things are said. They create wonderful opportunities for children to use AAC to practice the same language over and over again. Repetition is key!
- 6. Prompting** - Prompts are often offered as a hierarchy with the idea that we develop a plan to fade them out so that the child becomes progressively more independent (e.g. hand-over-hand, verbal prompt, gestural prompt)
- 7. Build on a child's interests** - Use a child's interests to build on opportunities to communicate. The child using AAC is more likely to fully engage and use their device to talk about a topic, if they are interested in it!



Activities

Activity	Sample Message	Example Activity
Cause and effect toys (e.g. toys that light up, move, make noise, etc.)	“turn on/off” “my/your turn” “make it go” “do more/again”	
Puzzle	“put in/on/here/there” “I want more”	
Bubbles	“go up/down” “do more” “I want more” “I see it”	
Drawing or colouring	“I want” colours “I/you do it”	
Look at family photos	“I see” “I like” “who/where/what”	

**Length of utterance may vary depending on children’s interaction with device



Links and Resources

Blog: Using Proloquo2Go to talk about the coronavirus

<https://www.assistiveware.com/blog/using-proloquo2go-to-talk-about-the-coronavirus>

Blog: Language opportunities for using AAC at home

<https://www.assistiveware.com/blog/language-opportunities-using-aac-home>

Activity Ideas - Core Words at Home

<https://www.assistiveware.com/blog/the-games-we-play>

<http://www.speechlanguagepirates.com/toys-and-activities-to-target-core-vocabulary/>

[https://www.aacandautism.com/assets/uploads/Core Word of the Week.pdf](https://www.aacandautism.com/assets/uploads/Core_Word_of_the_Week.pdf)

Need a paper-based display for home? Download a free “Core Word Board”

<https://coreword.assistiveware.com/t/a0-core-word-posters-english-spanish-french-and-dutch/2260>

Blog: How to be a Respectful Communication Partner

<https://www.assistiveware.com/learn-aac/follow-their-lead-how-to-be-a-respectful-communication-partner>

Create an AssistiveWare Core Word Classroom Account	What is in the AssistiveWare Core Word Classroom?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Go to https://coreword.assistiveware.com/login• Click ‘Sign up’• Enter information and click ‘create new account’• Activate the new account through your email	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Core word planners with ideas for activities• Word of the week planners that highlight a variety of ways to practice that word and online free e-books for home use• Core word 5 minute fillers focused on common activities at home (Ex., Cars, Playdough, Mr. Potato head)• Resources and tips to support planning

