AAC MODELING

How to support AAC at home

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What is AAC?

AAC stands for Augmentative and Alternative Communication. It is when a person uses a way other than talking to communicate. AAC can use pictures, signs, or typing. AAC words are real words, and should be respected just as much as verbal words.



What is AAC Modeling?

AAC modeling is when families, teachers, or friends use AAC to talk with someone who is learning to use AAC. Using the same communication mode as your child helps them see how AAC works, and learn the meaning of AAC words. AAC modeling is the most powerful way to help children learn to use AAC, and everyone can do it!



Steps for AAC modeling

1. Get the AAC.

Make sure your iPad, CORE board, picture symbols, or switches are within reach!

2. Get your child's attention.

Use something fun (their favorite book, a snack, a toy) to catch their interest.

3. Say something using AAC.

Touch a button on a device, or point to an icon and say the word out loud on a CORE board.

4. Offer AAC to your child.

Wait expectantly for 10 seconds. Count to 10 in your head.

5. If your child says something, respond!

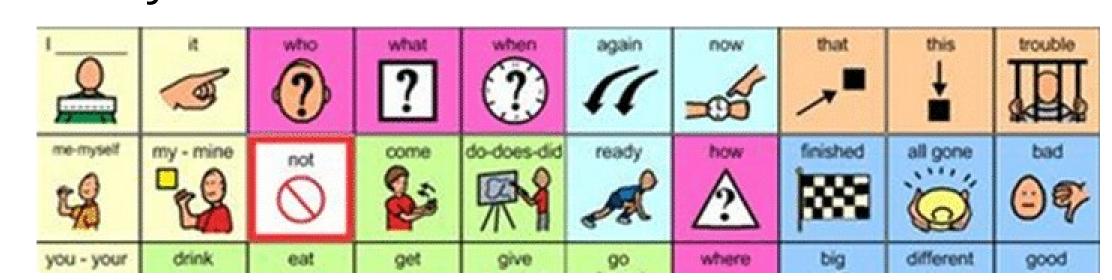
Even if they say something that does not make sense, they are exploring and learning.

6. If your child doesn't say anything, that is okay!

They are watching you use AAC, and learning how it works.

7. Repeat steps 3-5.

Keep modeling in lots of different places and situations. Learning happens everywhere!



Strategies for AAC modeling

Talk about what your child is doing

If your child is playing, talk about what you see them doing. Cars can STOP and GO, baby dolls GO IN bed, kids go UP and DOWN the slide, and they WANT to EAT their favorite snacks. You can add words to what is already happening.

Talk about what you are doing

If you are doing something, talk about what you are doing. Are you going to GO in the car? EAT lunch, or WAIT to use the bathroom? Talk about it!

Focus on CORE

CORE words are the most common words we use in English. Words like stop/go, want, I, you, more/all done, help, in/out, turn, etc. Using these words makes modeling easier, because you can learn where they are on the AAC system, and use them for multiple things. These are powerful words for children to learn, so focus on CORE to make communication stronger!

Start with 1-2 words at a time

It is okay to use 1-2 words at first. Don't worry about using complete sentences! Pick one or two words that make sense, and use them over and over. Repetition helps learning!

Play with AAC

Children learn AAC by exploring the words in their system. You can do that too! Experiment to see what you can find. Try different words! Use AAC while you are playing, and use AAC as a way to play. Talking should be fun, and it is okay to make mistakes.