

# Encouraging Teachers to use AAC in the Classroom

We often meet challenges when introducing AAC systems and strategies from the clinical or “speech room” setting into the busy and sometimes chaotic environment of the classroom, home or work settings. The “real world” of communication does not always play out easily for the person using AAC. Whether they are using lo-tech or hi-tech systems there are strategies that can assist staff, families and facilitators in the selection of where to start when bringing in AAC into the day.

This presentation has basis in two strategies for approaching including AAC into events; 1) Beukelman & Mirenda’s Participation Plan, & 2) George Karlan’s Environmental Communication Teaching.

## **Student (who struggle with speech) Categorization** (Walser & Reed, 2001)

### •Alternate language group

- Use little or no speech
- Considerable language comprehension issues

### •Expressive language group

- Severe motor speech disorder
- Language comprehension nearly/intact for CA

### •Supportive language group

- Moderate motor speech dysfunction
- Language comprehension below CA level

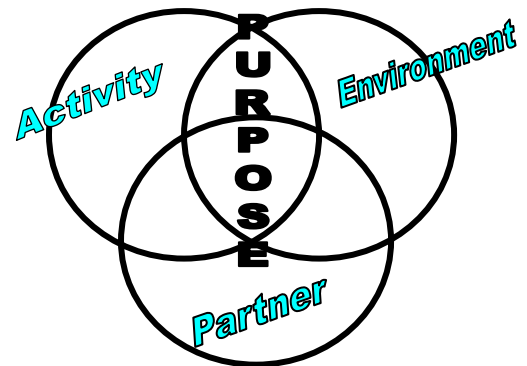
## **Communication Must Be...** (Cuff)

- Fun
- Motivational
- Meaningful
- Purposeful
- Easy
- Repetitious
- Age Appropriate
- Cause a Response or Continuation
- Natural to the Activity
- Given in Small Units

## **Knowledge of the Communication Routine is a Key...**

### **When communicating with peers & adults, the student needs to:**

- Know when to communicate
- Take turns appropriately in conversation
- Initiate conversation
- Have more than one style of interaction depending upon the listener or situation
- Exhibit appropriate greetings & closings for different listeners & situations



### **Activities can target**

- Vocabulary Expansion
- Automaticity of Symbol Locations or Sequences
- Language Development
- Multi-modal Communication
- Replacing Socially unacceptable communication behaviors

## **Social Contexts of Expressive Communication for Students at School**

- **Dyadic Interaction** = Social Interaction...Arriving, departing, breaks or transitions between classes or work or community activities
- **Joint Action Routines** = Activities that are common...to home activities, to school routines, to job activities, to community activities; Scriptable, Context Specific Vocabulary
- **Behavior Regulation** = What the student says to...direct the actions of another; have basic daily needs met for...hygiene, getting around, physical care, dressing
- **Instructional/Work Activities** = Participating by Presenting, Answering & Asking questions...in class, in a meeting, in an interview

### **Target Activities with these characteristics**

- “Process” rather than “product” oriented
- Represents class of activities
- More than one “selection” for activity type can be offered at any given time
- Activity occurs 3-4 times each week

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## Activity Structuring - Identify:

1. Natural Environments
2. Routines within those environments
3. Specific skills required throughout the activity
4. Discrepancies between current and desired performance
5. Existing or new communication requirements
6. Communication messages

## One Training Model: ECT – Environmental Communication Teaching Training Basics

- Activity-Based Objectives
- Environmental Arrangements
- Prompt Hierarchy

## Planning Steps of an Activity - Social Regulation Functions

- How is it Initiated?
  - Where does it begin?
  - What is the transition from the previous activity?
    - Who begins it?
    - How is it begun?
    - What is said or done?
- How is it Maintained?
  - What are the operations that must be carried out?
    - With what must they be done?
    - Who must do them?
  - What must be said to carry them out?
    - Who must say these things?
- How is it Terminated?
  - What actions end the activity?
    - Who does them?
    - When
  - Who ends the activity?
    - What do they say?

## Environmental Arrangements to encourage communication initiation

- naturally occurring
- interesting materials & activities
- materials in view, out of reach
- materials with which need assistance
- novel element
- small amounts
- inadequate portions
- sabotage of familiar routine
- provide choices
- provide supports

## Most-to-Least Prompting Hierarchy (when teaching a new skill)

- Plan for systematic fading
- Steps
  1. Full physical prompt
  2. Partial physical prompt
  3. Modeling
  4. Gesture
  5. Verbal
  6. Independent (natural environmental cue)

## Least-to-Most Prompting Hierarchy (for mastering a skill to independent use)

- Fading is built-in
- Steps
  1. Environmental cue
  2. Verbal cue
  3. Gestured cue
  4. Model
  5. Partial physical

## When Using AAC (Augmentative & Alternative Communication) Tools

### Terminology

- No Tech, Low Tech, High Tech
- Aided vs Unaided
- Dedicated vs Non-dedicated
- Direct Selection vs Scanning

# Encouraging Teachers to use AAC in the Classroom

## Choosing Vocabulary *Don't just guess or only use what "an adult" would say*

- Preprogrammed Vocabulary Packages
- Environmental Inventory
- Dialog
- Shadow Peers
- Role Play
- Tape Record

## Make Sure to Use High Frequency Words (Core Vocabulary) *from VanTatenhove, 2005*

- First 8 Words (done, help, want, mine, more, stop, that, what)
- First 15 Words (done, away, go, help, here, I, it, like, mine, more, stop, that, want, what, you)

## Categories of Communicative Function

- Requesting an Action, Object, Person, Information
- Directing Attention to Self, Object, Person, Action
- Rejecting/Refusing
- Commenting
- Giving Information
- Seeking Information
- Expressing Feelings
- Greeting
- Reinforcing
- Answer
- Comply
- Social Niceties

## Types of Choices within Activities/Tasks

- Within the Activity: a choice of 2 or more materials that is provided within the context of an activity
- Between Activities: a choice of 2 or more different activities is provided
- Refusal: at the onset of an activity, provide the choice of whether or not to participate
- Who: provide the opportunity to choose with whom to participate in the activity
- Where: provide an opportunity to choose where the activity will occur
- When: provide the opportunity for scheduling the activity at a different time
- Terminate: provide the opportunity to end the activity at a self-selected time

## Organizing Symbols *(Blackstone)*

- Activity-Based Displays (Schematic)
- Category-Based Displays (Taxonomic)
- Semantic-Syntactic Displays (Linguistic)
- Alphabetic Displays (Orthographic)

## Planning/Training Strategies for AAC Competence *(Light & Binger)*

- Linguistic: storage & retrieval of language for communication
- Operational: user & facilitator, automaticity
- Social: pragmatics
- Strategic: clarification, repair, redirect, pragmatics

<b>RESOURCES</b>
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- Beukelman, D.R., & Mirenda, P. (2006). **Augmentative and alternative communication: Management of severe communication disorders in children and adults**(4th ed)PaulH.Brooks Publishing Co:Baltimore,MD.
- Downing, J. E. (1999). **Teaching communication skills to students with severe disabilities**. Paul H. Brooks: Baltimore, MD.
- Durand. V.M. (1990). **Severe behavior problems: A functional communication training approach**. The Guilford Press: New York.
- Glennen, S., & DeCoste, D. (1997). **Handbook of alternative & augmentative communication**. Singular Publishing Company: New York.
- King, TW. (1999). **Assistive technology: Essential human factors**. Allyn and Bacon: Boston.
- Light, J.C., & Binger, C. (1998). **Building communicative competence with individuals who use augmentative and alternative communication**. Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.: Baltimore, MD.

Web Resources	CONTACT INFORMATION
AAC: Augmentative and Alternative Communication	<a href="http://www.isaac-online.org">http://www.isaac-online.org</a>
Augmentative Communication News	<a href="mailto:sarahblack@aol.com">sarahblack@aol.com</a>
Augmentative Communication Specialists Resource	<a href="http://www.aacintervention.com">http://www.aacintervention.com</a>
Closing The Gap	<a href="http://www.closingthegap.com">http://www.closingthegap.com</a>
Communicating Together	<a href="http://www.comtog.net">http://www.comtog.net</a>
International Society for AAC	<a href="http://www.isaac-online.org">http://www.isaac-online.org</a>
Journal of Special Education Technology	<a href="http://www.cec.sted.org/tam">http://www.cec.sted.org/tam</a>