
AAC stands for Augmentative and Alternative Communication.

- **Augmentative** = adding another way to communicate *alongside* speech.
- **Alternative** = providing another way to communicate when speech isn't available or accessible.
- The goal is **communication**, not making a child use one particular method.

What can AAC look like?

AAC isn't just a tablet or device. It can include pictures, communication boards or books, written words/keyboards, speech-generating devices, and communication apps. A child might use more than one option depending on the situation.

Multimodal Communication: Children naturally communicate in many different ways. They may:

Talk • Point • Gesture • Sign • Use pictures • Use AAC • Read/Write

A child might even switch between these methods during the same interaction. What matters most is that their message is understood and respected.

Who can benefit from AAC?

AAC may help children who aren't consistently able to meet all of their communication needs through speech alone. This can include children who are difficult to understand, children who cannot reliably access speech in certain situations, or children whose spoken communication is still emerging. Importantly, families don't necessarily have to wait until they know why a child is having difficulty speaking before providing additional ways to communicate.



How do we choose the right AAC?

There isn't one AAC system that's best for every child. An SLP may introduce different options-such as signs, communication boards, spoken language, or speech-generating devices-and observe what the child notices, uses, and finds successful. The goal is to find reliable, meaningful ways for that individual child to communicate.

There is no "right" way to communicate. Some children may use AAC occasionally, while others may rely on it as a primary form of communication. The priority is making sure every child has meaningful, reliable ways to share their wants, needs, thoughts, feelings, and ideas-and that the people around them respond to those messages.

Will AAC stop my child from talking?

No. Providing AAC does **not** mean giving up on speech, and AAC can be used *alongside* spoken language. There is no evidence that giving children access to AAC negatively affects speech development.