Hope · begins · with · feeling · understood

Intro to Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC)

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Seattle Therapy – Skills for Life

December 2, 2020

Disclosures

- Joanna Ristow has no financial relationships relevant to this presentation to disclose.

- All planners have no relevant financial relationships to disclose.

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Objectives

What is AAC?

- Define the terms

- Examples

- Who is AAC for?

AAC Defined

Augmentative: anything that adds to verbal speech

Alternative: anything that substitutes for verbal speech

Communication: back and forth *social* and informational exchange

Examples of AAC

No tech
- Gestures, eye gaze, sign language

No extra items needed
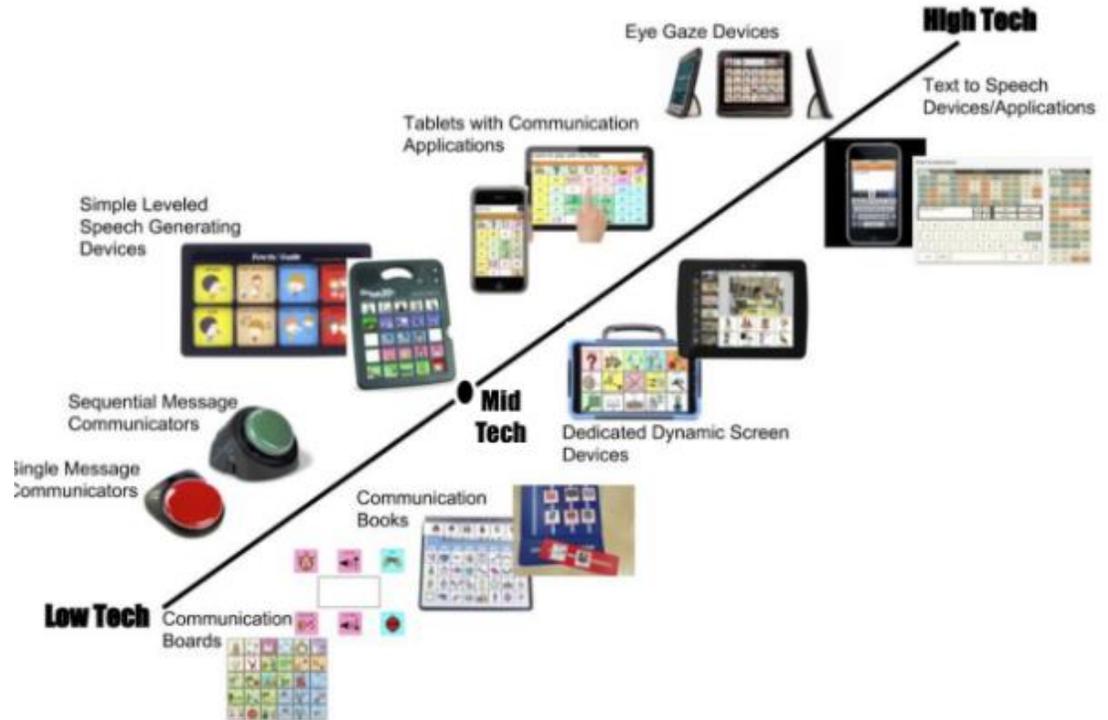- Low tech

Anything made with paper

Mid tech
- Anything with a simple battery

High tech
- Interactive with digital voice output

AAC Continuum:
https://sites.google.com/a/nssed.org/nssedintegratedtech/resources/communication/aac-continuum

No Tech

No Tech: no extra items needed
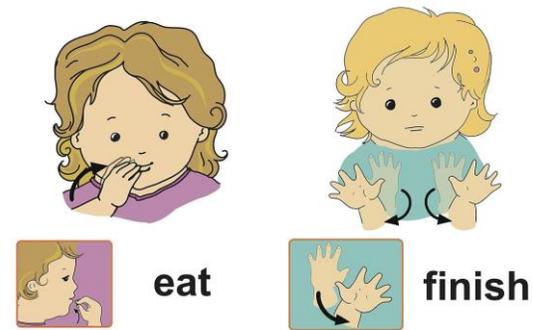- Pointing, gestures
- Eye pointing
- Sign language

eat   finish
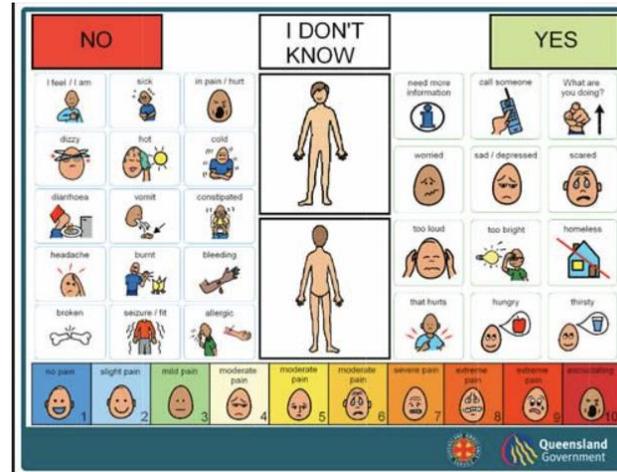

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Low Tech

Anything using paper-based tools
- Writing
  - ABC boards
- Picture symbols
  - Picture Exchange
- Printed "boards"
  - Core boards
- Choice boards

Mid Tech

Anything with a simple battery; typically pre-recorded
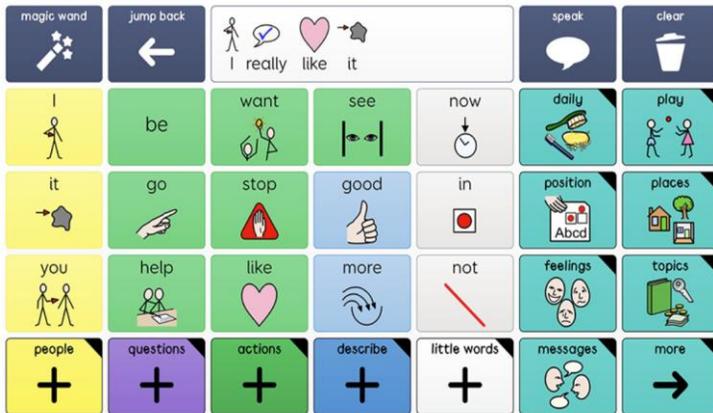- Single message buttons
- Multiple messages
  - Sequenced
  - Multi-level

High Tech

Typically tablet based, interactive, and touch accessible
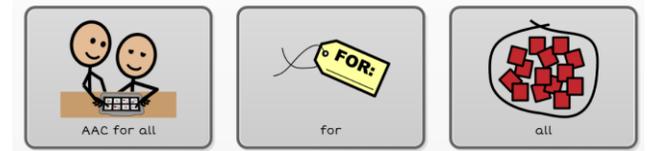
- [Symbol based](#)
- Text based

Who is AAC for?

AAC does:
- Help teach language and social interaction
- Reduce frustration
- Support communication during stress
- Require time and teaching

AAC **does not**:
- Prevent verbal speech from developing
- Require ANY prerequisites: cognitive, behavioral, motoric, age, language

Who is AAC for?

- Good candidates for AAC include:
    - People who cannot use verbal speech to get their needs met
        - (Biological *and* social)
    - People who use behaviors instead of words to communicate
    - People who may have verbal speech but it is either:
        - Not reliable based on their sensory or emotional state
        - Primarily scripted
            - E.g. they repeat phrases but cannot put words together
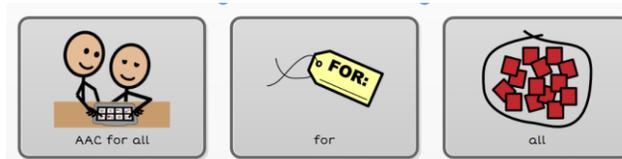
To Review:

- AAC stands for augmentative or alternative communication
- There are many types of AAC, from no tech to high tech
- Everyone can benefit from AAC.
- Providing AAC is a decision-making process
  - Consider the needs of the communicator and team
  - Requires ongoing support

References

Blischak, D.M., Lombardino, L.J., & Dyson, A. T. (2003). Use of speech-generating devices: In support of natural speech. Augmentative and Alternative Communication, 19 (1), 29-35.

Millar, D.C., Light, J.C., & Schlosser, R.W. (2006). The impact of augmentative and alternative communication intervention on the speech production of individuals with developmental disabilities: A research review. Journal of Speech, Language and Hearing Research, 49 (2), 248-264.

Romski, M. (2005). Augmentative communication and early intervention: Myths and realities. Infants and Young Children, 18 (3), 174-185.

ASHA's evidence maps: https://www2.asha.org/evidence-maps/

Questions

THANK YOU!

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