
Practical Tips and Strategies for Embedding AAC into Daily Routines

— Deborah Akinyele, CCC-SLP —

Introduction

- Speaker background and financial disclosures



Definition of AAC

“Augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) describes multiple ways to communicate that can supplement or compensate (either temporarily or permanently) for the impairment and disability patterns of individuals with severe expressive communication disorders.”

Source: American Speech-Language and Hearing Association

Overview of AAC Tools and Devices

AAC can be any of the following:

- Unaided
 - Gestures
 - Facial expressions
 - Manual signs
 - American Sign Language (ASL)
 - Aided
 - Communication boards
 - Computers
 - Speech-generating devices
-

Overview of Research: The Impact of AAC on Communication

- Butt et al (2022). **The role of Augmentative and Alternative Communication in Speech and Language Therapy: A Mini Review.**
 - Walker and Chung (2021). **Augmentative and Alternative Communication in an Elementary School Setting: A Case Study**
 - Pereira et al (2020). **“Augmentative and Alternative Communication on Autism Spectrum Disorder: Impacts on Communication.**
-

Barriers to Consistency in AAC Use

- Lack of client motivation
 - Lack of availability or accessibility of AAC systems
 - Inadequate or inconsistent teacher/caregiver training
 - Decontextualized learning
 - Types of vocabulary available in AAC systems
-

Tools for Incorporating AAC Use into Daily Routines

- Functional profile
 - Routines-based interview
 - AAC assessment
 - Teacher/Caregiver education
-

Strategies for Incorporating AAC Use into Daily Routines

- Ensure that you are using the appropriate AAC tools or methods for the client's developmental level and communication needs
 - Identify activities that are motivating for the client and provide opportunities for them to communicate with at least one partner every day.
 - Identify family routines that provide the most opportunities for the client to communicate with at least one partner every day.
-

Strategies for Incorporating AAC Use into Daily Routines

- Create a list of functional words that communication partners can model for the client during daily routines and activities.
 - Model vocabulary based on the most appropriate pragmatic function for each client
 - Include unaided AAC methods when modeling vocabulary
 - Keep aided AAC tools and devices accessible to clients throughout the day
-

Case Study: Berto

Demographic Profile:

- 4 year old non-speaking male child with a diagnosis of Autistic Disorder
 - Lives at home with both parents, grandmother and two older sisters
 - Exposed to both Spanish and English
-

Case Study: Berto

Daily Routines and Activities

- Cared for during the day by his grandmother while his parents are at work and his sisters are at school
 - Goes to the park with his parents and siblings on Saturdays
 - Goes to church with his whole family on Sundays and attends Sunday school for 2 out of the 3 hours they are at church
 - Parents have no plans to enroll Berto in school-based services until he is eligible for kindergarten
-

Case Study: Berto

Developmental Profile:

- Delayed adaptive, cognitive, social-emotional, receptive and expressive communication skills
 - Age expected gross and fine motor skills
 - Parents are primarily concerned with frequent tantrums, and communication deficits
 - Parents are not familiar with alternative and augmentative communication modalities
-

Questions and Discussion



References

- **Butt AK, Zubair R, Rathore FA. (2022).** *The role of Augmentative and Alternative Communication in Speech and Language Therapy: A mini review.* J Pak Med Assoc. 2022 Mar;72(3):581-584. doi: 10.47391/JPMA.22-023. PMID: 35320253.
 - **Walker VL, Chung YC. (2022).** *Augmentative and Alternative Communication in an Elementary School Setting: A Case Study.* Lang Speech Hear Serv Sch. 2022 Jan 5;53(1):167-180. doi: 10.1044/2021_LSHSS-21-00052. Epub 2021 Dec 13. PMID: 34902289.
 - **Pereira ET, Montenegro ACA, Rosal AGC, Walter CCF. (2020).** *Augmentative and Alternative Communication on Autism Spectrum Disorder: Impacts on Communication.* Cogas. 2020 Nov 13;32(6):e20190167. Portuguese, English. doi: 10.1590/2317-1782/20202019167. PMID: 33206773.
 - **Moorcroft A, Scarinci N, Meyer C. (2019).** *A systematic review of the barriers and facilitators to the provision and use of low-tech and unaided AAC systems for people with complex communication needs and their families.* Disabil Rehabil Assist Technol. 2019 Oct;14(7):710-731. doi: 10.1080/17483107.2018.1499135. Epub 2018 Aug 2. PMID: 30070927.
-

Thank You!

deborah@thebalancebrands.com
