

Reducing Challenging Behaviors With AAC

Speech Language Pathologists and parents of individuals with challenging behaviors can keep these communication functions in mind when working on improving their use of AAC.

Choice making – Helping the individual make choices throughout their daily routine may increase independence and opportunity to communicate.

Requesting – Requesting for help, food/drink, a favored activity.

Protesting – Being able to tell someone they do not like something. Being able to say “stop” or “no.”

Getting attention of communication partners – Engaging in social interactions and getting the attention of others within their environment when they need to communicate a want or need.

Answering questions – Being able to say yes or no, answering a communication partner to get their needs met.

Implementation Tips:

- 1.) Model the appropriate communication function on the child’s device.
- 2.) Acknowledge the child’s message when they access a button on their device.
- 3.) Continue to assess and make modifications to messages available for the individual to communicate.

Sources:

American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. (n.d.). Challenging behavior as communication. American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. from <https://www.asha.org/njc/challengingbehavior-as-communication/>

Walker, V., & Snell, M. (2013). Effects of augmentative and alternative communication on challenging behavior: A meta-analysis. *Augmentative and Alternative Communication*, 29(2), 117–131. <https://doi.org/10.3109/07434618.2013.785020>

