



A Year of Tips for Communication Success



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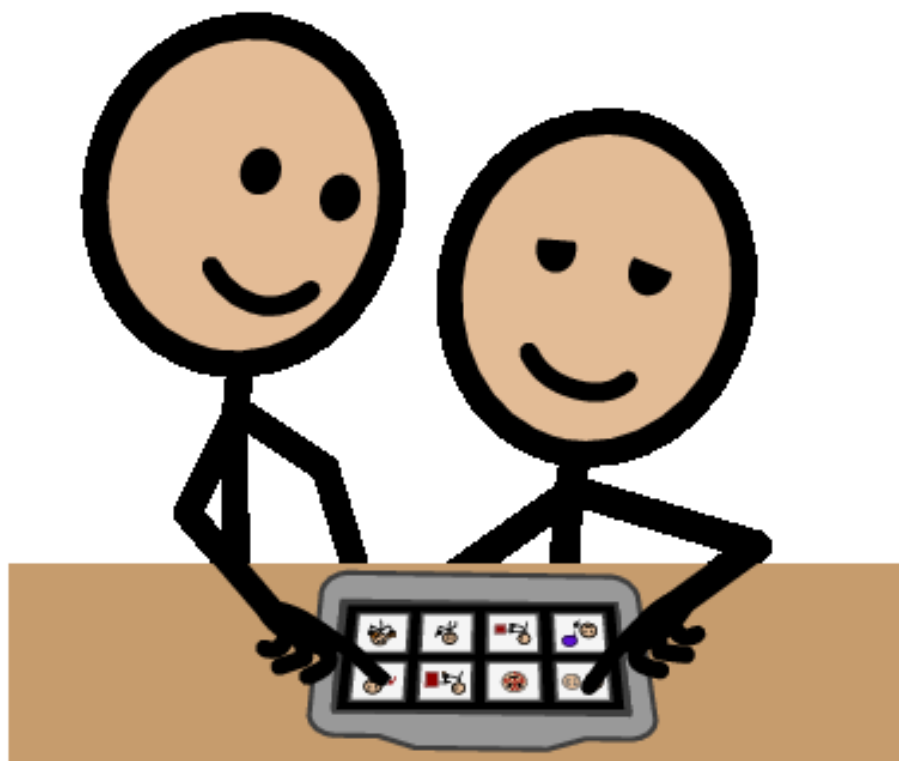
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Create Communication Success: Teach communication through 'modeling' on an augmented communication system (AAC).

A popular strategy used to help children learn to talk with a communication system is for the **communication partner** to use the system and talk with it. Model how to use it. For example, when you are ready to stop an activity, point to the picture "stop" and say "stop!"

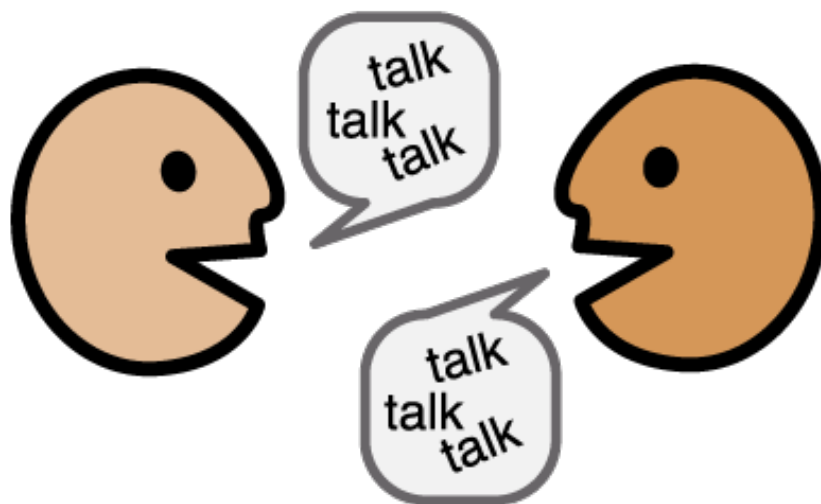


Create Communication Success: Teach communication with an AAC system by understanding language and communication goals.

Language is a symbolic communication system that is learned. Language includes spoken and written words, pictures, gestures and facial expressions.

Communication is a shared experience between two or more people. For example, greet a friend by saying "Hello!". Or, tell someone how you feel by saying, "Wonderful!"

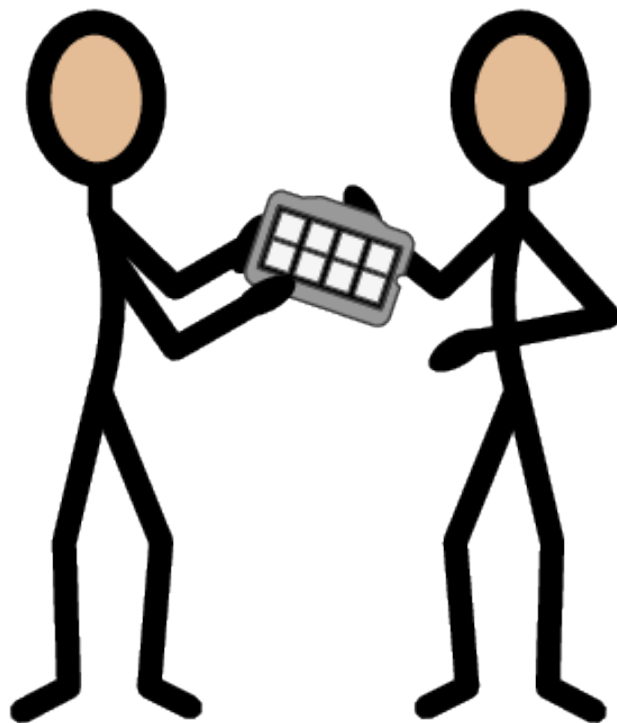
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Create Communication Success: Learn to be a great communication partner.

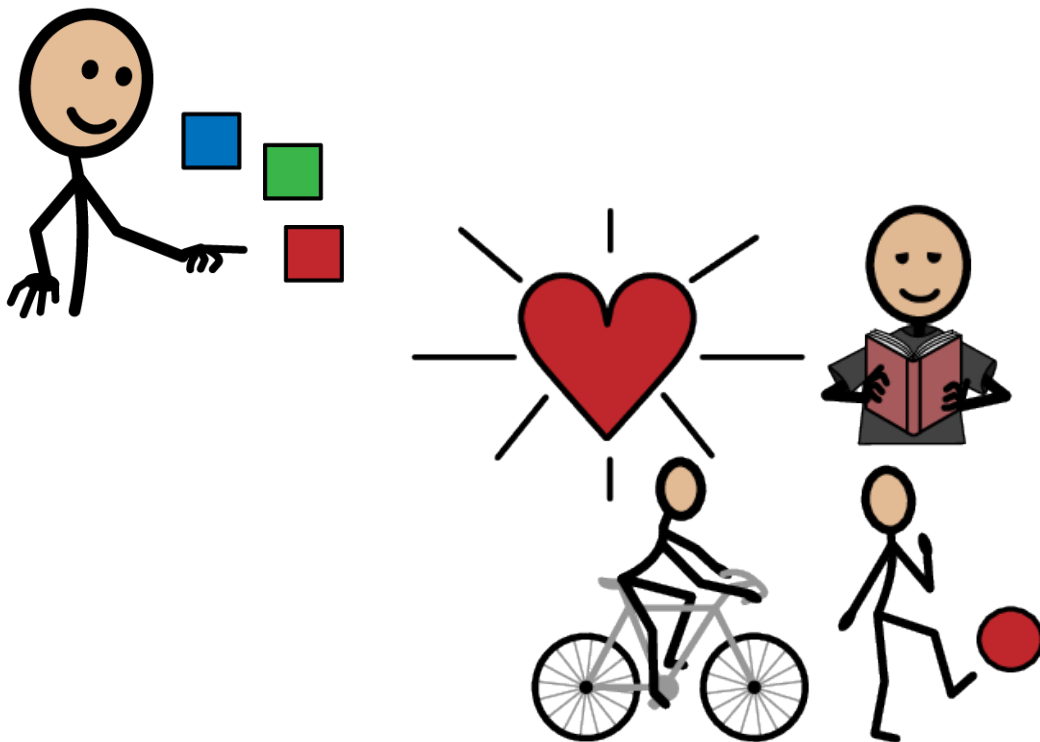
Parents, family members, friends, teachers and therapists are the MOST IMPORTANT SUPPORT for our augmented communicators.

Communication partners interact, listen to, attribute meaning, and connect with beginning communicators to lay the foundation for life-long communication skills that will continue to grow and develop.



Create communication success: Maximize the power of communication by providing many opportunities throughout the day.

We communicate for many reasons, to comment, make choices, request, get information, and repair messages when misunderstood. For example, during recess, a child could select a favorite friend to play with or choose a favorite tricycle. Or during a storm, a child may communicate feeling “scared”.



Create communication success: Share experiences through reading

Reading with a child creates a shared experience to talk about. Whether the characters are off on a great adventure, learning to cope with difficult events in their day, or trying new things with friends, reading together provides an opportunity to learn new words and share ideas. Reading aloud with children is one of the most important activities for reading success.

Communication systems provide exposure to letters and text, words, and pictures. Beginning readers and writers require many opportunities in order to learn to read. The 2018 Saltillo Calendar includes a book that is commercially available and often found on YouTube. Remember to model the targeted core words while reading and engage the child in the activity.



Create communication success: Interactive writing experiences

Communication systems can provide access to early writing experiences. Speech sounds are represented by letters which form words and meaning. Over time, students understand that writing represents their words on the page. Many of the Saltillo vocabulary options include a feature to save content from the speech display bar (SDB) to a button. This is an excellent way to save someone's writing and watch it grow.

Save messages from a keyboard or words within the vocabulary.



Select a button to save the writing.



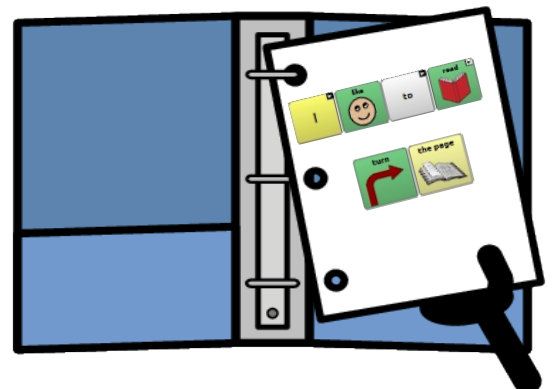
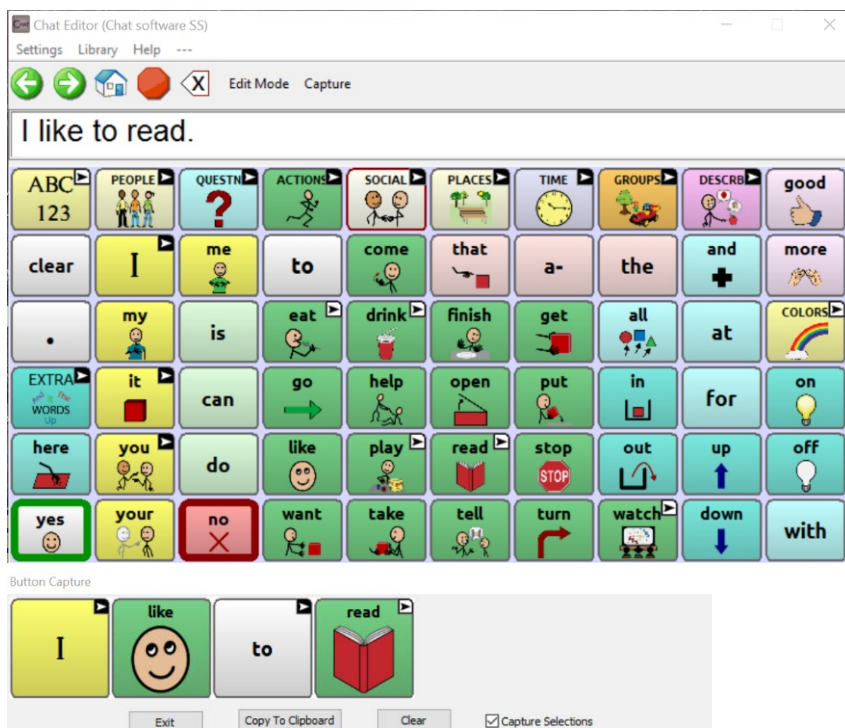
Check out a tutorial about Stories and Scripts
(Stories & Saved Phrases)



Create Communication Success: Utilize visual supports to make communication concrete and interactive.

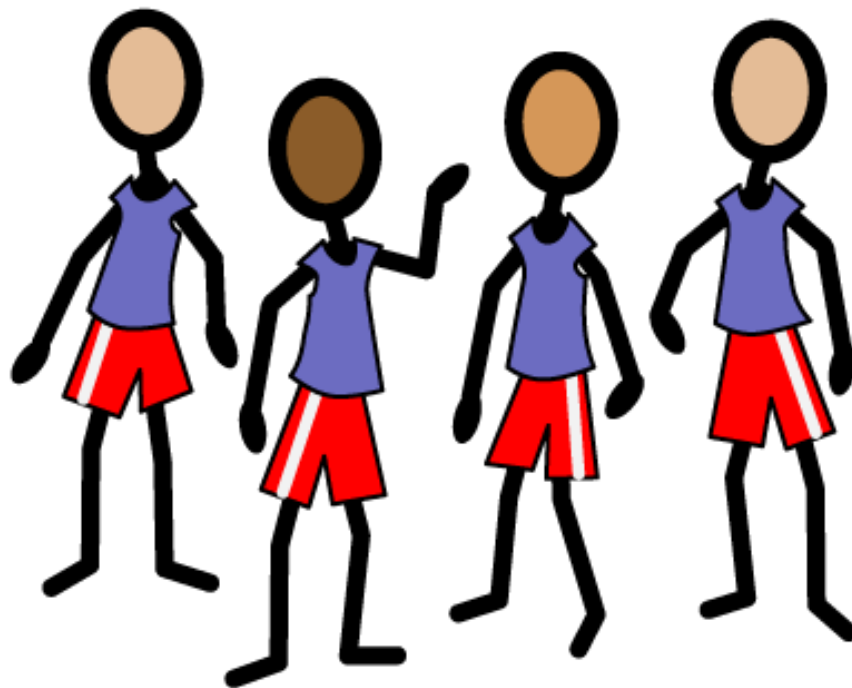
Visual supports help increase receptive and expressive communication and support appropriate behavior. Visual reminders can be used to teach routines (steps to make granola), cue children about expectations (clean up), make choices (choose song at circle) and teach new skills (I need a break). Visuals paired with spoken language or sign-language provide multiple modalities to help children participate and learn.

Try **Chat Editor** and the button capture feature to create your own visual supports.



Create Communication Success: Build a Team!

Success with AAC means interacting and communicating ideas and interests with people at home, school, and the community. Assemble a team that includes the primary players: family members, teaching staff and school supports, private therapists, etc. and decide on an easy way to share information (e.g., blog, app). When we all participate, we have ownership of learning to use the system and facilitating communication across settings.

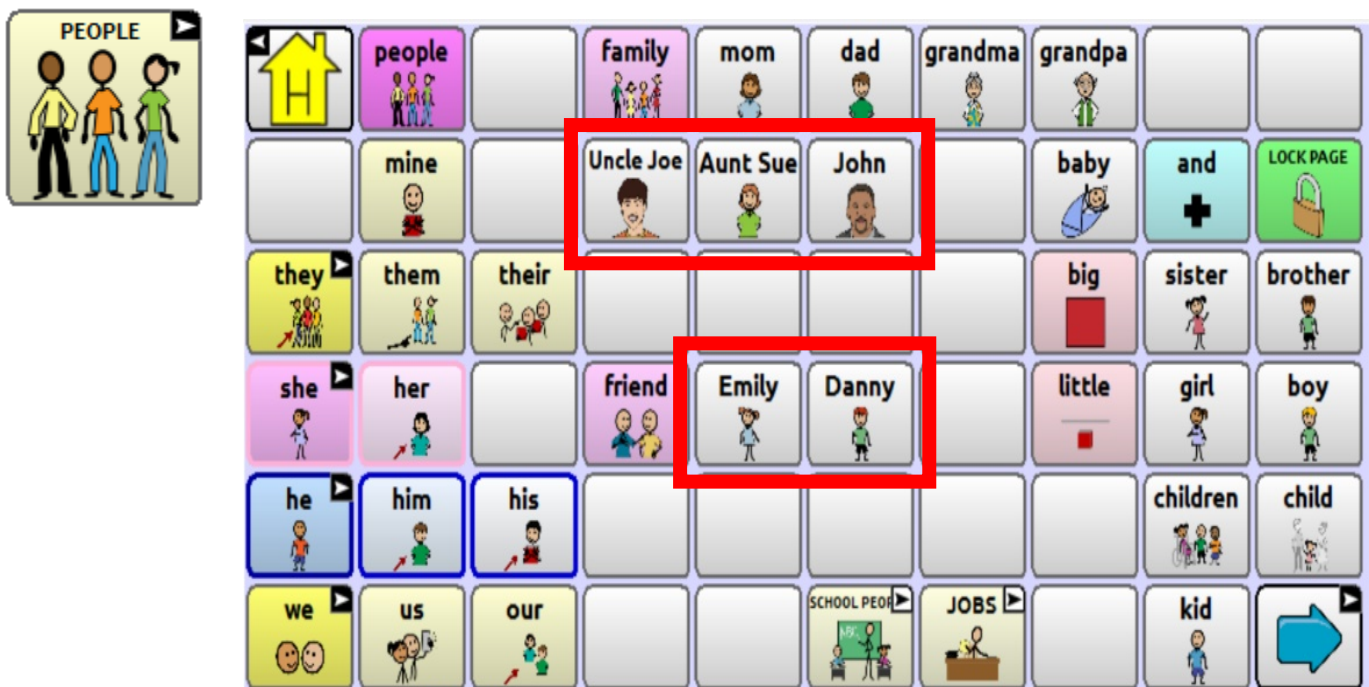


Create Communication Success: Personalize the communication system.

A few simple changes to an AAC system create ownership.

Here are some ideas:

- add favorite people, activities, social comments (greetings, jokes, slang)
- match the voice to the person
- adjust speech display font size (bold type for print awareness)



Create Communication Success: Provide low-tech options as tools to back-up dedicated AAC systems.

Personal manual core communication boards are wonderful for modeling language and literacy all day, every day. Low-tech options should match the communicator's vocabulary file. The personal size is transportable and creates individual opportunities for modeling and authentic communication opportunities (in the bathtub, pool, horseback riding). Poster size core boards make a great classroom support.



WordPower 60 Basic with Categories



Find additional tips for low-tech use here

Low-tech communication options are available on the Saltillo website
<https://saltillo.com/chatcorner> .

Create Communication Success: Use Voice Assist to control the environment.

Voice assistants create opportunities to control the environment. With a voice assistant (e.g. Alexa, Siri, Cortana, Google Home, etc) and an AAC device, you can control lights, fans, music and other “smart home” devices. Voice Assistants offer fun ways to ask questions about the world. (example: Alexa, what is an eclipse?) WordPower and MultiChat files include basic commands for some of the voice assistants.

In WordPower



In MultiChat 15

