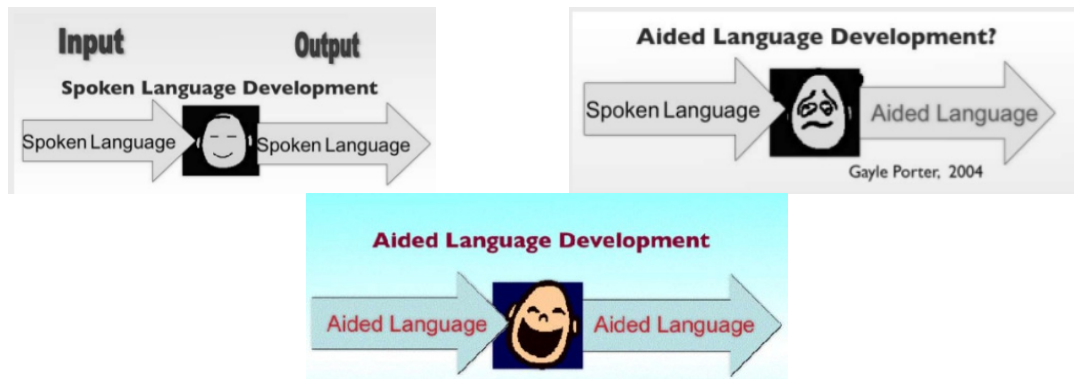


AIDED LANGUAGE STIMULATION (MAKING LANGUAGE VISIBLE)

Children's Treatment Network of Simcoe York
Augmentative Communication Consultation Services (ACCS)

WHAT IS AIDED LANGUAGE STIMULATION?

- An approach of teaching someone how to use an augmentative communication system by **modeling** how to use it.
- The goal is to create an environment in which the AAC user can **learn** from others how to use their communication system.
- Children learn to speak by listening to the people around them speak; they need models to help them learn and to improve their expressive and receptive language skills.
- **It takes years of listening and observing for a child to learn to speak...the same is for our children who use AAC.**



HOW TO MODEL:

- Modelling means pointing to the picture (vocabulary) on the display when you speak.
- **Model a variety of message types naturally** (comments, questions, greetings, commands, requests); talk about what the child is seeing, hearing, doing and feeling.
- **Avoid testing** the child about the location of vocabulary (e.g., "where is 'GO'?", "find 'APPLE'").
- **You do not need to model EVERY word** you say, model in short grammatically correct phrases (e.g., 'GO' or 'I' + 'GO' + 'PARK' while saying "I am **going** to the **park**").
- Aim to model vocabulary as much as possible throughout the day as lots of repetition helps learning.
- Model the same words in different contexts to help the child generalize those concepts across situations.

WHERE DO I START?

- The child will begin as a passive participant while the communication partner points to the visual symbols on the tool as he/she speaks.
- Initially, it is expected that **90%** of the use of the communication tool will be by the communication partner, and **10%** will be by the child.
- Begin with highly motivating activities- **the purpose is to establish an enjoyable, shared interaction.**
- Start with 1-2 symbols at a time (e.g., "Let's **go** to the **park**" but only model 'Go' and 'PARK').
- When the child indicates something non-verbally, provide the child with the symbol(s) (1-2 symbols only) to communicate the same intent. For example when the child looks at the cookie jar, you could say 'cookie' or 'want + cookie' on the child's display.
- When the child uses the display to express something using a single word **expand** the message into a two-word combination (e.g. Child: "eat" Partner: "want eat" or "eat cookie").

References:

1. Aided Language Stimulation handout from An Overview From: Infusing Assistive Technology into Early Childhood Classrooms, Early Assistive Technology Training Project Staff: (1996). J. Wilcox, T. Norman-Murch, J. Oberstein, D. Kempka, M. Volkmann, E. Malena, & C. Musselwhite.
2. Aided Language Stimulation; Research to Practice. (2010). L. Burkheart; J. Cafiero, J.; C.R. Musselwhite; S. Sennott.