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:

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