

AAC IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

- Take time to familiarize yourself with the pages and the content in your child/student AAC tool (visual communication book or Speech Generating Device). Explore it with your child, talk about how vocabulary is organized in pages (categories) and how you can find specific food, people, and activities by looking within the categories/pages.
- Before your child can become proficient at using an AAC tool, s/he will need to experience and see other people communicating with it. Partners can model use of the AAC tool by pointing to the visuals as they communicate. Example,
 - providing **directions**: “it’s time for _____” (*pointing to the visual*)
 - **requesting** items: “pass me the _____ and the _____”
 - giving **choices** of 2 or 3 items: “do you want _____ or _____?”
 - showing **symbol-object** correspondence by pointing and pairing visuals to real items, actions and feelings
 - sequencing short sentences using **core words**: “go + toilet”
- Use a “multi-modal” language approach to support receptive and expressive communication, integrating the use of visual tools with other means of communication (verbalizing, signing, gesturing).
- Set up routines that require turn taking and opportunities to interact by requesting or commenting (games, arts and crafts).
- Create opportunities for using the AAC tool through “*gentle sabotage*” (pouring a small amount of juice so that s/he needs to request more; holding parts of a game/toy; keeping desired items out of reach...).
- Rehearse for **meaningful** communication exchanges:
 - “let’s ask _____ for more cookies, go see dad and point to...”;
 - “we need a red crayon, show Ms. _____ what color you want by pointing to it”).
- Use the AAC tool to acknowledge that you understand your child’s message by pointing to the visual and verbalizing.
- Expand your child’s communication output by repeating the message and adding one more word (ie, child points to “juice”, partner points and verbalize “more + juice”).
- Teach core words by modeling simple sequences (I + want + _____; I + don’t + like + _____; go + to + _____) during real-life interactions (getting dressed, having snack, playing games, reading a book,...)