

AAC Devices

AAC devices, also known as **Augmentative and Alternative Communication devices** are often used by people who cannot rely on speaking alone to express themselves. They are also used by people who are still learning to speak. These tools include low-tech simple picture boards and high-tech digital tablets. This handout tells you more about AAC devices.

There are many kinds of AAC devices that your child can use. Each AAC device has special features that support different communication needs.

Every child is different, and your child's Speech Language Pathologist can help you figure out which kinds of AAC work best for your child.

Talk with your child's **speech-language pathologist**, also called **SLP**, to:

- **Find an AAC device** that is a good match for your child.
- **Help make the device more easy for your child to use**, even if the device itself is complex. For example, they can help change the layout of the pages and make buttons more easy to press.



Common questions about using AAC devices

Does AAC stop a child from learning how to speak?

Research shows that AAC does not stop a child from learning to speak. Every child is different.

- Some children need to use AAC for a short time, and others need to use it for a longer period.
- AAC can help children learn how to communicate.
- Some children also start to speak more after using AAC.

Do I need to wait until my child has done other treatments before trying AAC?

You can use AAC early in your child's treatment journey, you do not have to wait. Using AAC early gives them more tools and ways to communicate from the beginning.

Will using AAC always fix communication problems?

Like any other treatment, AAC has its limits and does not always fix communication problems. For some children:

- **Using AAC may be slower** than talking, because it takes time to pick words.
- **AAC devices may not have all the words** they want to use.

AAC is not a substitute for speech therapy. It is often used as a tool along with speech therapy.

Can I get AAC in different languages?

Yes, you can get AAC in different languages. Talk with your child's **Speech Language Pathologist** to learn more about finding a device that has all the languages your child needs.

Talk with your child's **Speech Language Pathologist** if you have questions about AAC device options.