



Alberta Health
Services



Helping Children with Communication Disorders to be Better Understood

Practical Strategies for Supporting Children to
Communication Effectively

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Overview

- Types of Communication Disorders
- Communication as a Basic Human Right
- What is AAC?
- Communication Breakdowns and AAC
- Practical Strategies for Supporting Individuals through Communication Breakdowns
- Questions?

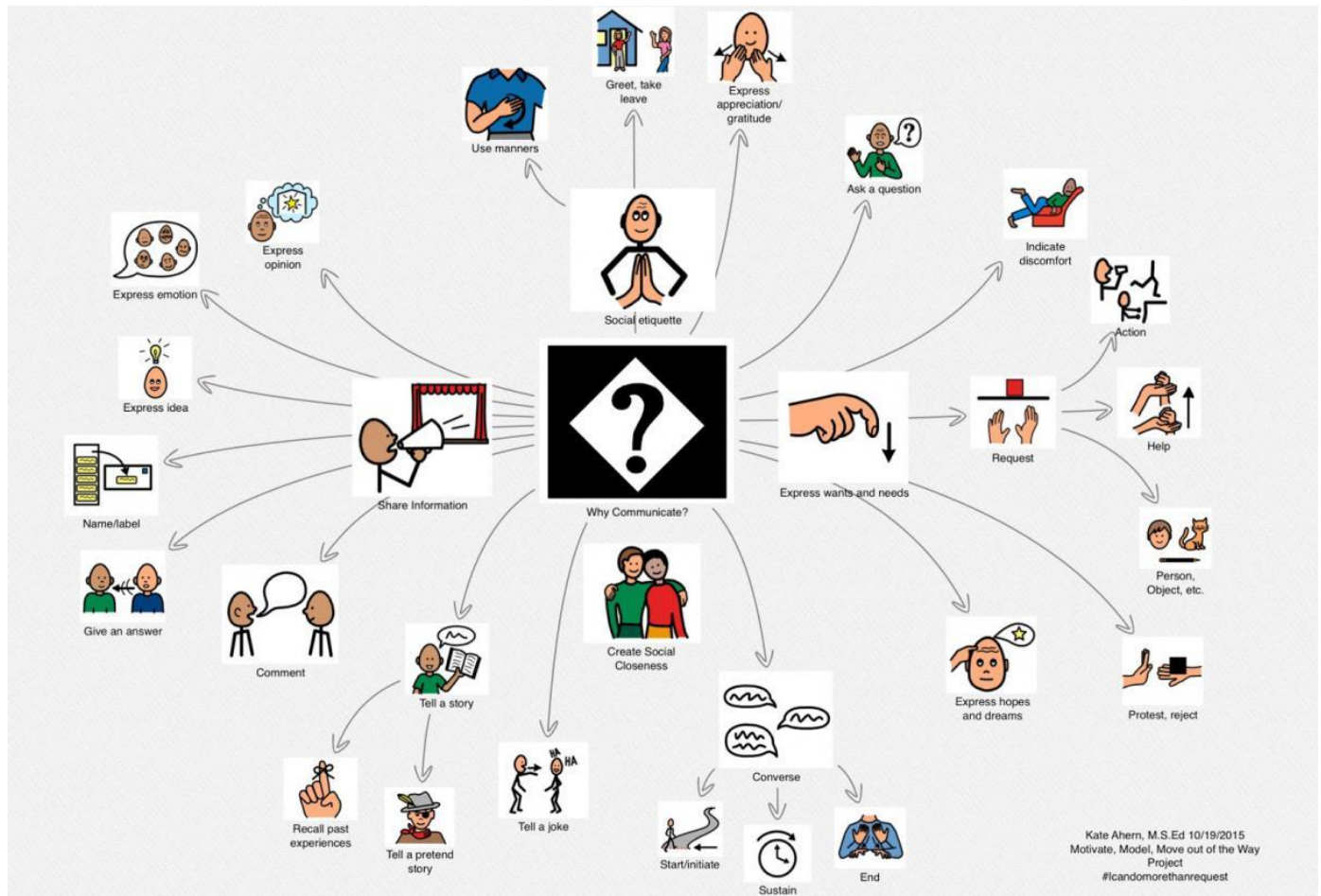
Types of Communication Disorders

Intelligibility: ability to be understood, heard clearly, etc.

- Types of communication delays or disorders which may affect intelligibility:
 - Articulation/Phonological
 - Fluency
 - Voice
 - Motor Speech/Apraxia
 - Dysarthria
 - Receptive/Expressive Language

Why do we Communicate?

- To request wants and needs
- To share information
- Social Purposes
- Social Closeness
- **To create connections**



<http://www.assistiveware.com/aac-more-requesting-moving-and-getting-strong>

Communication is a Basic Human Right



National Joint Committee for the
Communication Needs of Persons
With Severe Disabilities (NJC)

COMMUNICATION BILL OF RIGHTS

All people with a disability of any extent or severity have a basic right to affect, through communication, the conditions of their existence. Beyond this general right, a number of specific communication rights should be ensured in all daily interactions and interventions involving persons who have severe disabilities. To participate fully in communication interactions, each person has these fundamental communication rights:

1. The right to interact socially, maintain social closeness, and build relationships
2. The right to request desired objects, actions, events, and people
3. The right to refuse or reject undesired objects, actions, events, or choices
4. The right to express personal preferences and feelings
5. The right to make choices from meaningful alternatives
6. The right to make comments and share opinions
7. The right to ask for and give information, including information about changes in routine and environment
8. The right to be informed about people and events in one's life
9. The right to access interventions and supports that improve communication
10. The right to have communication acts acknowledged and responded to even when the desired outcome cannot be realized
11. The right to have access to functioning AAC (augmentative and alternative communication) and other AT (assistive technology) services and devices at all times
12. The right to access environmental contexts, interactions, and opportunities that promote participation as full communication partners with other people, including peers
13. The right to be treated with dignity and addressed with respect and courtesy
14. The right to be addressed directly and not be spoken for or talked about in the third person while present
15. The right to have clear, meaningful, and culturally and linguistically appropriate communications

For more information, go to the NJC website at: www.asha.org/njc

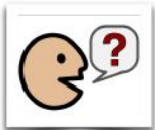
Brady, N. C., Bruce, S., Goldman, A., Erickson, K., Mineo, B., Ogletree, B. T., Paul, D., Ronski, M., Sevcik, R., Siegel, E., Schoonover, J., Snell, M., Sylvester, L., & Wilkinson, K. (2016). Communication services and supports for individuals with severe disabilities: Guidance for assessment and intervention. *American Journal on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities*, 121(2), 121-138.

Communication is a Basic Human Right

My Communication Bill of Rights



I have the right to my own friends and social life.



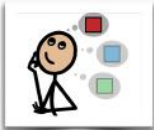
I have the right to ask for what and who I want and where to go.



I ALWAYS have the right to say, "no!"



I have the right to say what I feel.



I have the right to make my own, real, choices.



I have the right to say what I think.



I have the right to ask for, get and give information.

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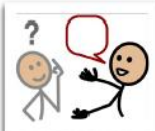
I have the right to know about the people in my life and everything happening to me.



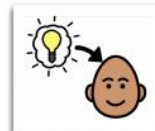
I have the right to be taught to communicate and have what I need.



I have the right to have my communication system (and other tools), to have them working and to be with people who know how to set up, use and fix my communication system.



I have the right to be heard and answered, even if I can't have what I want.



I have the right to know about the people in my life and everything happening to me.



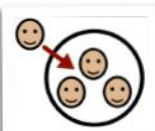
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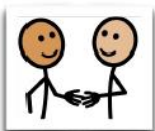
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I have the right to be part of my community



I have the right to be treated with respect.



I have the right to be talked to and not about.



I have the right to be talked with in a way I understand.



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What is Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC)?

Strategies and Tools that support communication for people who:

- Cannot meet all of their communication needs through speech alone and need to **Augment** or support their speech in different ways
- Are unable to speak and need an **Alternative** form of communication



<http://www.aacconnection.com/what-is-aac.html>

Types of AAC Systems

No-Tech-unaided



Low-Tech/Paper-Based – static, typically paper-based



Mid-Tech- static, digitized speech output



High-Tech- dynamic, synthesized speech output

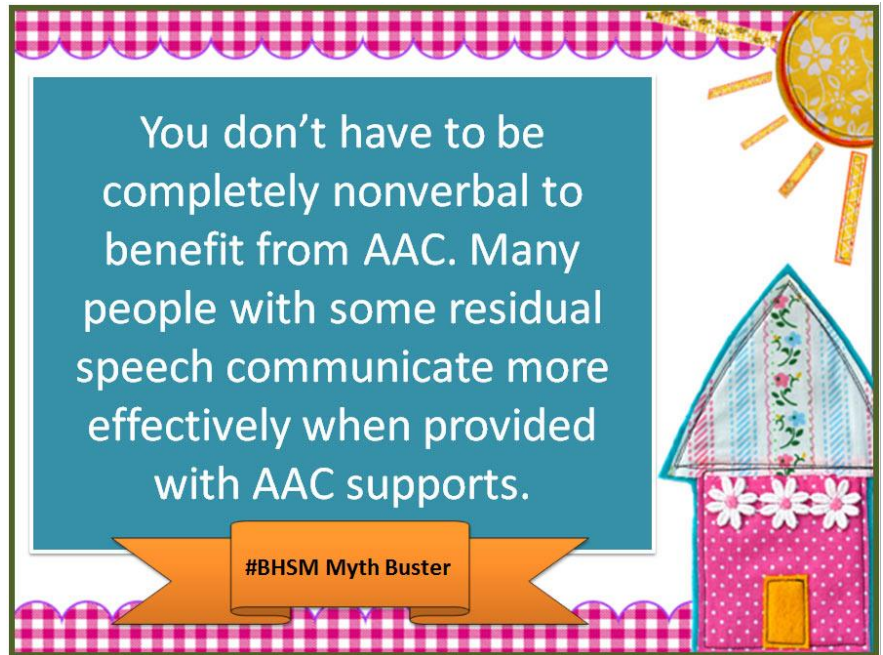


Research to Support AAC Use.



**BHSm
myth-BUSTER**

Research shows that AAC
does *not* impede the
development of speech &
language skills.



You don't have to be
completely nonverbal to
benefit from AAC. Many
people with some residual
speech communicate more
effectively when provided
with AAC supports.

#BHSm Myth Buster

Millar, D., Light, J., & Schlosser, R. (2006). *The impact of augmentative and alternative communication intervention on the speech production of individuals with developmental disabilities: A research review.* Journal of Speech, Language and Hearing Research. 49:248-264.

Communication Breakdowns and AAC

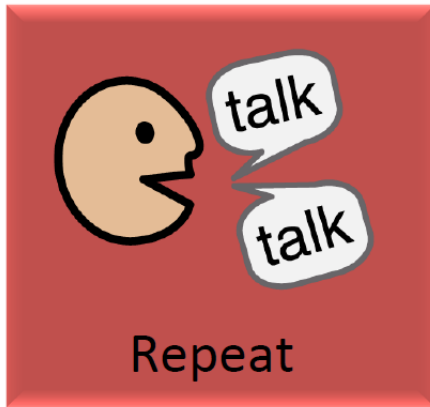
Key Principles of Repairing a Communication Breakdown:

1. **Be Honest:** When you don't understand someone, don't pretend you do, just tell them.
2. **Give Specific Feedback:** Help the person develop awareness around when you do and don't understand him/her/them.
 - a) E.g. I liked when you faced me while talking, it helped me hear your message.
3. **Repeat:** Repeat back what you did understand.
4. **Be systematic:** When communication breakdowns happen, try to be consistent in the steps you take to repair it.

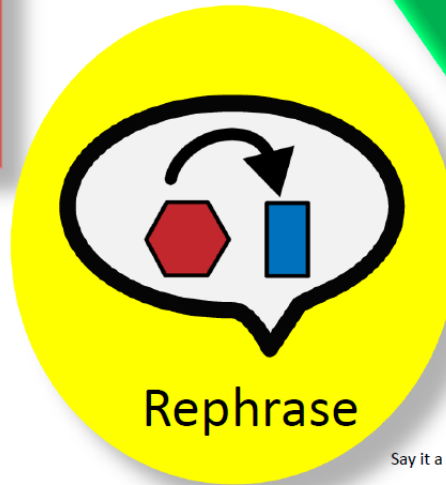
Practical Clarification Strategies

Be systematic.

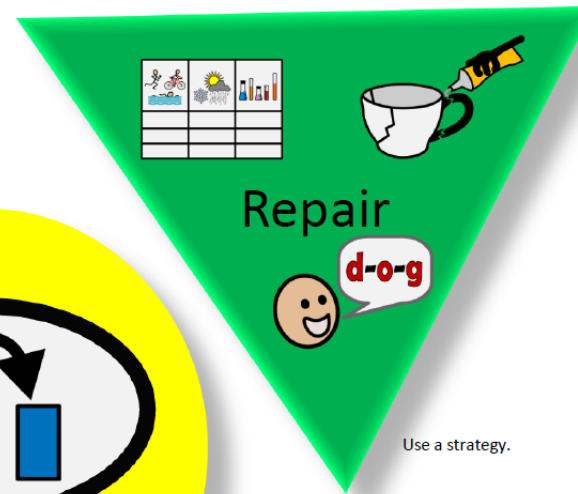
How to fix communication breakdown.



Say it again, say it slower.

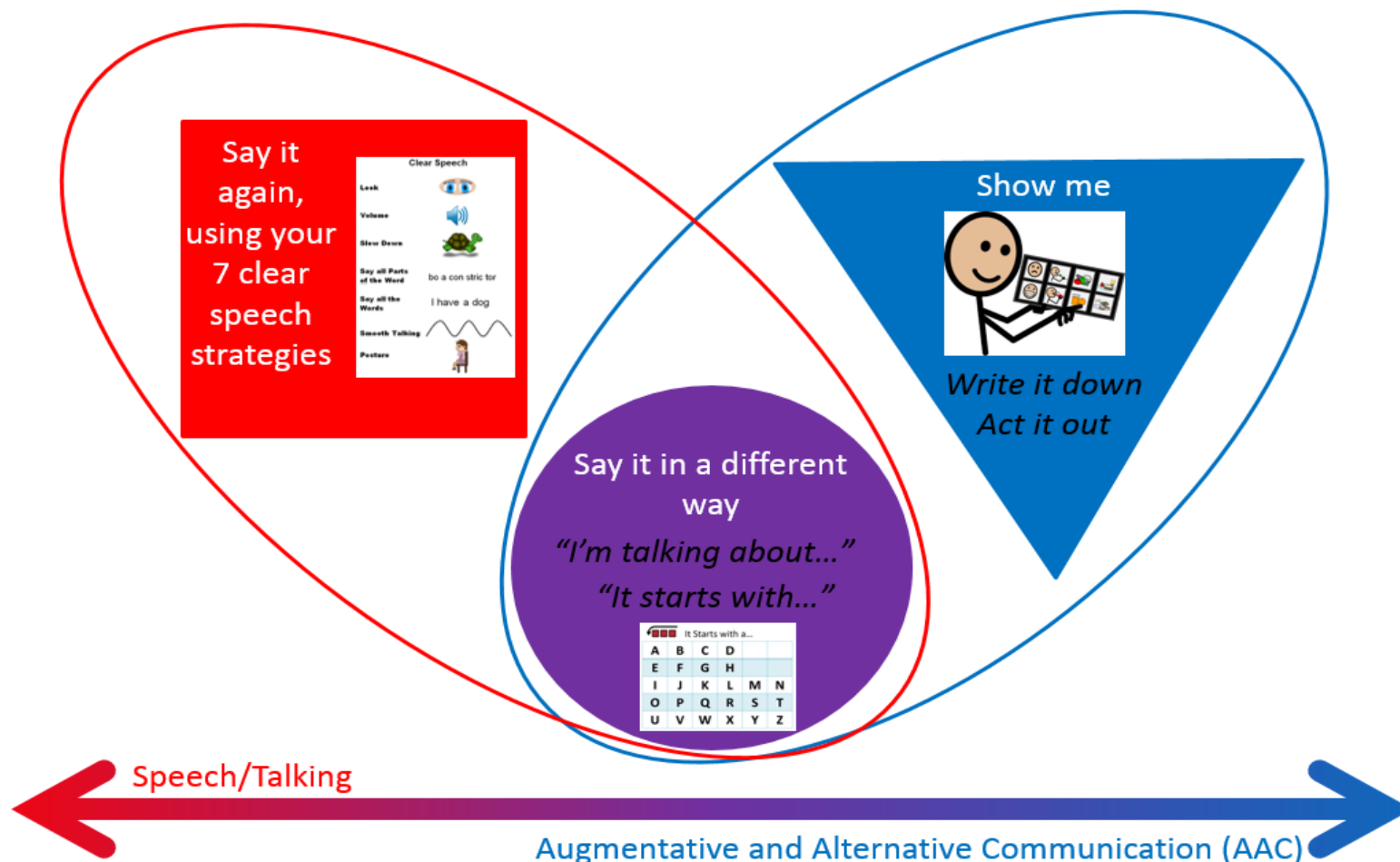


Say it a different way.



Use a strategy.

Be Systematic.



Created by Heather Golberg, R.SLP adapted from "Communication Repair Boards" by Kate Ahern, M.S.Ed. (<https://kateahernaacvoices.wikispaces.com/file/view/Communication+Repair+Boards2.pdf>)

Make a Plan for When Breakdowns Happen.

IDEAS FOR IMPLEMENTING STRATEGIES TO HELP CLARIFY SPEECH ATTEMPTS

Example:

John will use the following steps when he is not understood:

1. *Repeat what he said.*
2. *Use different words.*
3. *Use his alphabet board to cue with first letter.*
4. *Use his board to show the topic.*

Communication partners will follow these steps when John is not understood:

1. *Let John know you do not understand.*
2. *Repeat what you heard and understood.*
3. *Ask John to look at you, using the predetermined gesture of touching your eyes.*
4. *Ask John to spell it on his board.*
5. *Ask John to show you (on his board or the item if it's near-by).*

IDEAS FOR IMPLEMENTING STRATEGIES TO HELP CLARIFY SPEECH ATTEMPTS

CLARIFICATION STRATEGY SUMMARY SHEET

Date: _____ Name: _____

_____ will follow the following steps when he/she is not understood:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

Partners communicating with _____ will follow these steps when they do not understand his/her speech attempts:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

<http://icannews.blogspot.com/2013/11/i-canclarify-that.html>

Summary of Clarification Strategies for Partners

Say that you don't understand
Don't pretend that you do



Repeat what you think you understood



Encourage the child to keep trying



Ask the child to:

slow down



say it in a different way



give a clue



show/act it out



spell, write or draw it



use picture board




Try to understand the topic by asking:
Who, What, Where, When questions




Ask YES/NO questions, modelling use of a topic board:
Are you talking about a person?
Are you talking about a place?
Are you talking about school?



Develop a Communication Passport

Things I like to talk about	My Communication Passport	What else you can do to help me
<p>I like to talk about Bottle Top Bill, Mister Men, Monica Toy .</p> <p>Model, describe, and converse, Notice, discuss and demonstrate.</p> <p>You can help by talking (modeling words) about....</p> <p>My weekend, what I did at home, my favourite books, my friends, my learning and things we are going to do.</p> <p>Explore</p> <p>"Where is...?" "Show me", "Tell me", "and Say it with your speaker"</p> <p>Please show my passport when introducing new people to me. Maybe I can introduce them to others.</p>	<p>Hello, my name is _____</p> <p>I am 7 years old.</p>  <p>Here I am with my speaker</p> <p>I can use my speaker to communicate with you.</p> <p>I can also communicate with you by sometimes using my words, signing and communication boards.</p> <p>These should always be near me so I can communicate with you.</p>	<p>Do use the AAC system to talk yourself</p> <p>Don't expect the AAC user to communicate without you modelling how</p> <p>Do provide wait time</p> <p>Don't do all the talking</p> <p>Do make sure AAC is available all day, every day</p> <p>Don't limit access to the AAC system</p> <p>Do focus on key words when modelling</p> <p>Don't think you always need to model grammatically correct sentences</p> <p>Try not to ask too many questions. And finally.....</p> <p>Practice, Practice, And Practice Remember AAC is like learning a new language and we are learning it together.</p>

<https://www.tes.com/teaching-resource/augmentative-and-alternative-communication-aac-passport-11534071>



Alberta Health
Services
Glenrose Rehabilitation

NAME _____

Communication Passport

About me:

- My name is
- I really like....

Important things to know:

How I communicate:

- o **EXAMPLE:** I understand what you are saying but I can't speak words to respond
- o **EXAMPLE:** I use facial expressions, body language, sounds, movement towards things and an Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) device to express myself
- o **I communicate yes/acceptance by:**
- o **I communicate no/reject by:**

Tools: (The equipment I use to make messages)

- **High tech** (Dynamic Speech Generating Communication Device):
- **Vocabulary Set:**
- **Low tech** (paper-based):
- **How do I "access" it:**
- **Technical Support:**














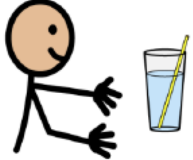

Strategies: (How I work with others to make messages)

I'm working on:

DRAFT

Adapted from <http://practicalaac.org/strategy/strategy-of-the-month-back-to-school-with-aac/>

Immediate Needs Should Be Met First.

 <p>I'm uncomfortable.</p>	 <p>I'm tired.</p>	 <p>I'm frustrated.</p>	 <p>Don't want!</p>	 <p>I don't understand!</p>
 <p>I'm mad!</p>	 <p>I'm embarrassed!</p>	 <p>Feelings are hurt.</p>	 <p>I'm sick.</p>	 <p>Something hurts.</p>
 <p>I'm hot!</p>	 <p>I'm cold!</p>	 <p>I'm hungry!</p>	 <p>I'm thirsty!</p>	 <p>Something else is wrong!</p>

Encourage the Use of Clear Speech.

Clear Speech

Look



Volume



Slow Down



**Say all Parts
of the Word**

bo a con stric tor

**Say all the
Words**

I have a dog

Smooth Talking



Posture



Determine the Topic/Context.

- Use topic boards, categories, personal-vocabulary dictionaries, etc.
- Communication partners should model introducing context/topics using the phrase **“I’m talking about...”**
- While the individual is still learning, the partner should support by asking topic-related questions, “Is it a person? Is it a place...?” etc.

I am talking about:



Determine Topic/Context and/or Describe it.

Topic

Topic

Describe it

How close

 person	 place	 action	 activity	 feelings
 clothes	 food	 vehicle	 game/toy	 animal
 colour	 size	 what do you do with it?	 where	 something else
 yes	 no	 almost	 Got it!	 I give up

Created by Emily Hellvig-Sigvaldason, SLP-Assistant

Types of Questions to Ask:

- Ask yes/no questions, starting with more general questions and moving to more specific
 - E.g. “Is it about a person?” “Is it about a person at school?”
- Ask choice questions
 - E.g. “Is it about a family member or a friend?”
- Ask “Wh-” questions to narrow the topic down (Who, What, Where, When, Why, etc.)
 - E.g. “Where do you find it?”



Other Ways to Ask Questions/Offer Choices:

Choice Making with Hand Selection Set.

The Partner uses hands to present two different choices, motioning with each hand as each choice is mentioned. (e.g., "Do you want to move it closer? Or farther away?") The User indicates which hand is the preferred choice. (Can use nose as third choice)



Pros:

- No materials preparation (e.g., symbols)
- Fairly quick.

Cons:

- Requires auditory comprehension and short term memory.
- limited number of choices at one time.
- "None of the above" available?

Partner-Assisted Auditory Scrolling

The Partner previews all choices on the list. The Partner repeats all the choices one by one, pausing for the Client to process and respond. The Client signals "yes" when choice is heard. (Message Cycling)



Pros:

- No materials preparation (e.g., symbols)
- Fairly quick.

Cons:

- Requires auditory comprehension and short term memory.
- limited number of choices at one time.

Communicating Outside of the “Here and Now”.

- Sharing about past experiences connects all of us. It can also be one of the most difficult things to understand if you don't know the context.
 - Create a remnant book or memory book
 - Takes photos and have them available during sharing
 - Keep a calendar with photos or blurbs of what happened each day for the child to refer back to

Remnant or Conversation Books

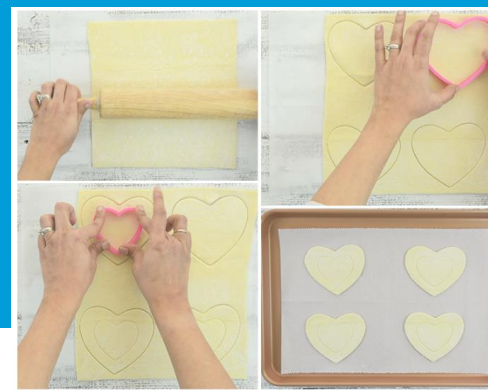
For more information on creating remnant or conversation books go to:

- [https://www.kidsability.ca/uploads/Augmentative%20Communication%20Services%20\(ACS\)/ACS/ACS%20resources/Clarification%20Strategies%20Powerpoint2015.pdf](https://www.kidsability.ca/uploads/Augmentative%20Communication%20Services%20(ACS)/ACS/ACS%20resources/Clarification%20Strategies%20Powerpoint2015.pdf)
- https://www.med.unc.edu/ahs/clds/files/how-to-handouts/RemnantBooks_000.pdf



<http://uniquely-speaking.blogspot.com/2014/01/remnant-books.html>

Photos/Calendars



<http://picturetherecipe.com/recipes/raspberry-hearts-raspberry-cream-cheese-pastries/>

Pictures:

- Provide topic cues and picture support for sharing. Encourage children to take photos of activities, important items, etc. to share while speaking later.
- This can be done in the camera roll of a phone, tablet/iPad, etc.
- Add labels with the app Photaname

Calendars:

- Write or use photos in a calendar so that the child can share about events and when they happened
- Try the app Photo365 to add photos on a calendar grid



<http://photo365app.com/>

<http://praacticalaac.org/praactical/how-we-do-it-using-aac-to-repair-communication-breakdowns/>

Spell/Write-it.

Use of this strategy is dependent on reading/writing skills.

- Have the individual spell the first letter of the word then more as needed
- Note:
 - If the individual cannot point to the board, you can ask row by row and wait for them to indicate “yes” or “no”.



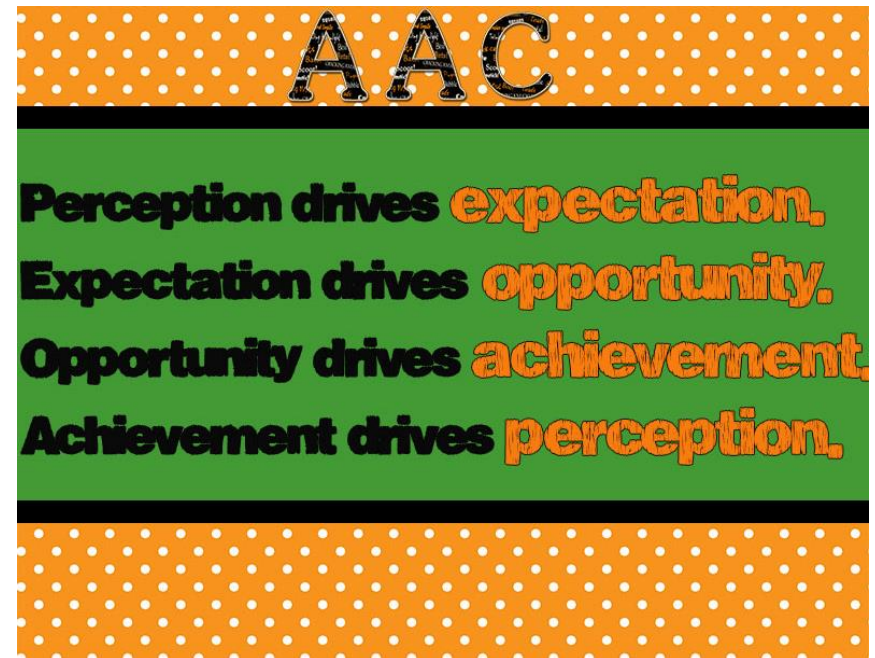
It Starts with a...

A	B	C	D		
E	F	G	H		
I	J	K	L	M	N
O	P	Q	R	S	T
U	V	W	X	Y	Z

<http://teachinglearnerswithmultipleneeds.blogspot.com/2013/12/communication-rrrepair-youre-going-to.html>

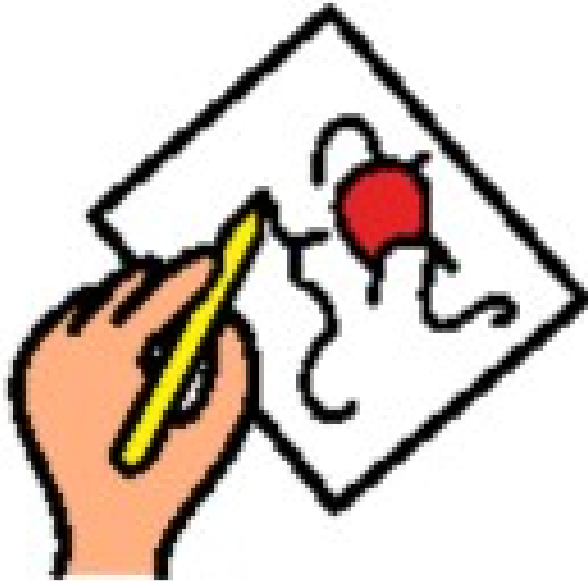
Effect of Supplemental Strategies:

- Implementation of combined cues (alphabet and topic cues) or alphabet cues alone result in the highest attitude ratings and intelligibility gains relative to topic cues or speech alone.
- Listeners also seem to be most willing to communicate with those using combined cues or alphabet cues



Hustad, K. C., Auker, J., Natale, N., & Carlson, R. (2003).
Improving intelligibility of speakers with profound dysarthria
and cerebral palsy. *Augmentative and Alternative Communica-
tion, 19*, 187–198.

Draw It/ Act It Out.



<https://www.thehunt.com/the-hunt/x88vd6-a-light-up-action-sign>

Additional Resources

Speech Clarification Profile Questionnaire:

- <http://praacticalaac.org/praactical/how-we-do-it-using-aac-to-repair-communication-breakdowns/>
 - Practical strategy suggestions and questionnaire for use with families and teams to determine communication breakdowns

Index of Augmented Speech Comprehensibility in Children (I-ASCC)

- <http://praacticalaac.org/praactical/say-what-aac-assessment-for-children-who-speak-with-dr-jill-senner-and-matthew-baud/>
 - Assessment for determining effect of context on single word speech

Helpful Websites

- <http://praacticalaac.org/praactical/how-we-do-it-using-aac-to-repair-communication-breakdowns/>
- <http://teachinglearnerswithmultipleneeds.blogspot.com/2013/12/communication-rrrepair-youre-going-to.html>
- <http://icannews.blogspot.com/2013/11/i-canclarify-that.html>
- <https://www.kidsability.ca/resourcesacs>
- <https://www.apraxia-kids.org/library/>