AAC Consideration Toolkit Guidebook

LINKS TO RESOURCES:
Access the digital version of the Guidebook

This Guidebook includes links to many online resources. If you are viewing a printed version of the Guidebook, use the QR code at left to access the digital PDF version and its links at https://mn.gov/admin/star/linkTBD. Throughout the Guidebook, links to resources are indicated in blue with an underline.

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Questions? **Visit:** mn.gov/admin/star **Call:** 1-888-234-1267 or 1-800-627-3529 (TTY 7-1-1)

SECTION 1

Getting Started

How to Use the Toolkit: An 8-Week Plan

Welcome to the AAC Consideration Toolkit. Thank you for taking this step in considering augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) systems for a student you support.

The Toolkit's eight (8) week loan period will go by quickly. Follow the steps in this week-by-week plan to help ensure a successful trial of the Toolkit's devices with your student. You can adjust and adapt the steps of the 8-week plan based on the student's needs and your familiarity with AAC, with the goal to allow the longest amount of time to trial AAC systems in the student's natural environments.

If you have questions or issues arise, call the Minnesota STAR Program at 1-888-234-1267 or the host loan agency.

WEEK 1

Familiarize yourself with the Toolkit and check in with the student's IEP Team & STAR

1. **Review the AAC Device Guide on page 9 of this Guidebook.** Unpack the devices in the Toolkit and verify you have received everything listed in the guide. If anything is missing, please contact the STAR Program or the host loan agency.
2. **If you have not already done so, please assess the student's current communication abilities** with a tool like DAGG-3 or the Continuum of Communication Independence. It is important to know the student's current communication level (emergent vs. symbolic) so you can make decisions about what AAC systems to trial and how to customize them for the student (see Week 2, step 4).
3. **Charge the AAC devices and install fresh batteries as needed.**
4. **Familiarize yourself with operation and programming of the AAC devices.** See the AAC Device Guide (page 9) for instructions and videos that will show you how to use each AAC device and AAC app.
5. **Coordinate with the student's IEP team** to schedule times to trial the AAC systems over the next few weeks that work with the student's schedule.
6. **Make a plan to review the AAC systems with parents or guardians.** Offer to demonstrate the AAC systems with them.
7. **Identify a time to check in with a STAR staff member and discuss any questions you may have.** Call 1-888-234-1267 or email star.program@state.mn.us to schedule.

WEEK 2

Identify engaging activities, select AAC systems and page sets, program vocabulary, and setup access methods

1. **Review** Tips for Success when Introducing AAC (page 25).

2. **Identify highly engaging activities and corresponding vocabulary to use during the trial.** Consider your student's interests and select or adapt 3–5 Highly Engaging Activity Ideas (page 26) to make the AAC system trials fun and interactive for your student. Begin to identify vocabulary that could be modeled during the activity.

3. **Identify or confirm the symbol size and number of vocabulary symbols per page that are appropriate for the student.**
   - Best practice is to use the smallest size of vocabulary button and the greatest number of vocabulary symbols per page that the student can manage (this will minimize navigation and support communication rate in the future).
   - If you're unsure, or want to verify what you selected as a part of the SETT Framework form completed during the Toolkit application, use the AAC Genie App (installed on the iPad included in this Toolkit) to identify the optimal vocabulary button size, number, and arrangement for the pages on the AAC device. See video tutorial on how to use the AAC Genie App.

4. **Identify the AAC systems and page sets that are appropriate to trial with your student.**
   - If the student is an emergent communicator, read about strategies for Emergent Communicators: Identifying AAC Systems to Trial (page 15).
   - If the student is a symbolic communicator, complete Step 1 of Symbolic Communicators: Identifying AAC Apps and Page Sets to Trial (page 18), including Form 1: Initial Assessment of Apps and Page Sets.

5. **Program the AAC systems.** Program the devices and apps/page sets with the vocabulary needed for the highly engaging activity you've selected. Base the setup on the student's needs for symbol type, symbol size, number of symbols per page, etc. See the AAC Device Guide (page 9) for instructions and videos to program the AAC devices and apps.

6. **If the student will be trialing the iPad, set up features that will enhance the AAC experience.** Check out Setting Up iPad Features for AAC (page 19) to enable guided access and lock the edit button.

7. **If the student needs an alternative access method, set up the needed access method.** Review the Guide to Alternative Access (page 21) to learn more and find additional resources. Consult with IEP team members, such as the classroom teacher, occupational therapist and other specialists, to verify the appropriateness of the access method.

WEEK 3

Begin to trial the customized AAC systems with the student

1. **Read and consider how you can incorporate Strategies to Boost Success with AAC** (page 32) as you trial the system(s) with the student.
2. **Introduce the AAC system(s) to the student and have them help select the voice for the AAC system's speech.** Review Setting Up iPad Features for AAC (page 19).
3. **It is time to start the trialing the system(s) with the student!** Model the AAC vocabulary and page sets you created while the student is engaged in one of the highly engaging activities you selected or modified.
   - Collect data on Form 2: Evaluation of Apps and Page Sets with the Student to record the student's performance.
4. **Based on the student's performance during the trials, make adjustments to the AAC system, including the vocabulary, page sets, and symbols**. Add additional vocabulary to the page set based on individual interests. Continue recording the student's performance data on Form 2 and carefully record how you adjusted the AAC system to support the student's performance when necessary.

WEEK 4

Continue the trial, connect with other IEP team members and communication partners, and address challenges

1. **Connect with IEP team members to share the student's performance data and your preliminary observations from Week 3.** If you haven't already, introduce them to the AAC system(s) you've been trialing with the student. Seek input on changes that may need to be made to the AAC system to enhance the student's performance—be sure to include parents in this conversation.
2. **Introduce the AAC system to communication partners.** Teach school professionals who regularly interact with the student about Strategies to Boost Success with AAC (see page 32). Share the video clips in this resource and model the strategies that are most successful with the student. Instruct partners on how to use the AAC system(s) and have them trial it with the student during highly engaging activities. Be sure that all partners model the targeted vocabulary during each trial and record the student's performance data using Form 2.
3. **Discuss challenges with IEP team members and make modifications.** Use ideas in Addressing Challenges to AAC Consideration (page 34) to make modifications to the AAC system(s) and/or data collection process to further customize for the team's and student's needs.
4. **Continue trialing the AAC system(s) with the student,** modeling the targeted vocabulary during highly engaging activities to keep the AAC system trials fun and engaging for the student. Don't be afraid to try non-electronic, light-tech, and high-tech devices with the student. You may find different devices work better in different situations. Continue to record student performance data and share it with the team.

WEEK 5

Trial the AAC system(s) in natural environments and with more communication partners

1. **Begin to trial the AAC system(s) with the student in their natural environments.** Based on the student's performance during weeks 3 and 4, begin to trial the AAC system(s) in the student's natural environments, modeling targeted words and phrases for the student.
   - Collect data on Form 3: AAC Use in the Student's Natural Environments form to record how the student used the AAC system in these settings.
2. **Introduce the AAC system to more communication partners.** Teach more communication partners (additional school staff, parents, peers, etc.) about Strategies to Boost Success with AAC (see page 32). Share the video clips in this resource and model the teaching strategies that are most successful with the student. Instruct them on how to use the AAC system, and have them trial it with the student in their natural environments. Be sure that all partners collect data about the student's use of the AAC using Form 3.

WEEK 6

Add more vocabulary symbols, encourage independence and increase environments

1. **Gradually add more vocabulary symbols by "unhiding" symbols from your page sets and/or programming additional vocabulary as needed.** To review hiding/unhiding vocabulary symbols, see the videos and manuals in the AAC Device Guide (page 9). Provide instruction and model to the student how to use the added vocabulary.
2. **Encourage spontaneous use and initiation of the AAC system by the student.** Coach communication partners to respond to the student's communication attempts.
3. **Reduce the level of prompts and cues, while maintaining student success.** will encourage independence.
4. **Trial the AAC system with the student in more environments.** Continue to collect data in these environments using Form 3: AAC Use in the Student's Natural Environments. It may be helpful to video record the student using the AAC system (always ensure there is media permission to videotape if using this option). Video clips can be useful to communicate your findings with the student's parents/guardians and other IEP team members.

WEEK 7

Determine outcomes and check-in with the IEP team

1. **Enter your findings from the trial in Form 4: Outcomes Summary.**
2. **Connect with the IEP team, including parents/guardians to share what you've learned about the features your student needs to be most successful with AAC.** This may include sharing the Outcomes Summary form, data collection forms, and video recordings.
3. **Determine next steps and identify the team members who will be responsible to complete the steps.**

WEEK 8

Save programmed vocabulary and page sets and return the AAC Consideration Toolkit

1. **Back-up and/or print hard copies of the page sets that were successful from the iPad apps.** You'll want them for future reference. See videos and manuals in the AAC Device Guide (page 9) for instructions about backing up.
2. **Pack up the Toolkit devices and guidebook.** Refer to the AAC Device Guide (page 9) to make sure everything is packed. You will be charged for any items not returned.
3. **Fill out the Loan Survey (part of the Loan Agreement from the Minnesota STAR Program) and submit it, along with the Outcomes Summary form** to STAR (star.program@state.mn.us) or the host loan agency.
4. **Return the AAC Consideration Toolkit to the host agency you received it from.**

AAC Device Guide

Learn about the three types of augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) devices that are part of the AAC Consideration Toolkit: non-electronic, light-tech electronic, and high-tech electronic.

Use these devices to build customized AAC systems for the student. AAC systems can be a single device, or a combination of devices (like an iPad plus a switch). For high-tech devices, a system also includes an AAC app.

1 NON-ELECTRONIC AAC DEVICES

PRC-Saltillo

Four (4) boards

Page sets of vocabulary and health care topics printed from PRC-Saltillo's app. Page sets include:

- Unity® 84 1-Hit for Accent® Devices
- 96 Locations Based on WordPower™ 60 Basic
- Essence for Accent®
- LAMP Words for Life®

Features

- English and Spanish options
- Laminated paper boards

Resource

- Visit aaclanguagelab.com/resources to find more downloadable symbol displays to print and laminate.

TD SNAP Core First/Quick Fires

One (1) board

Core word pages from the TD Snap app. These are a great introduction to language for symbol-supported communicators. A simple solution to be used in the car, at the playground, near the pool, or anywhere else it might be inconvenient to use a device.

Features

- Laminated paper board, 2-sided

Resource

- Visit us.tobiidynavox.com/products/core-first-communication-books to find more downloadable Core First communication books.

Talk To Me

One (1) board

Talk To Me's low-tech communication board features their 'school' theme of activities, common phrases on one side and the alphabet and numbers, plus directives on the flip side.

Features

- Laminated paper board, 2-sided

Resource

- Visit www.talktometechnologies.com/pages/educational-materials to find more downloadable personal communication boards

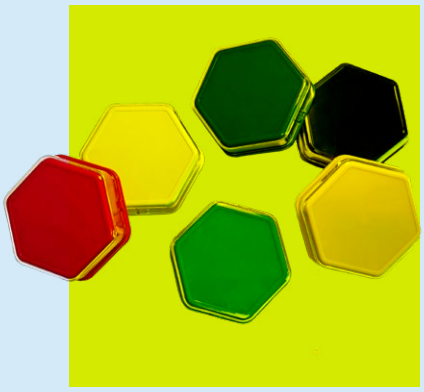
2 LIGHT-TECH ELECTRONIC AAC DEVICES

Talking Tiles

6 Pack

Talking Tiles are electronic, light-tech, AAC devices that play back recordings of speech. Each Talking Tile holds one recording that can be up to 80 seconds long. Built-in microphone, speaker, and direct audio in port make it easy to create recordings.

You can incorporate a symbol on the Talking Tile that represents its recording. Each Talking Tile has a clear cover to protect the symbol. Talking Tiles come in six different colors.



Features

- Each Talking Tile holds one message
- Tiles can be wall-mounted or held in place with Velcro
- Built-in microphone, speaker and direct audio
- Uses 3 AAA batteries

Guides and other resources

- User Guide (PDF)
- Product listing on Amazon

Video

- Talking Tiles demonstration

LITTLE Step-by-Step

The AbleNet® LITTLE Step-by-Step is a light-tech, electronic AAC device that plays back recorded speech. The LITTLE Step-by Step holds up to 4 minutes of messages that can be played back as a single message or as a series of messages.

You can record a series of questions for the student to ask in a conversation, and then each time the student presses the button, the device will speak one question. For example: “How are you?” and then, “What have you been doing lately?”

The device has three levels, allowing you to store three separate series of recordings. You can put a symbol on the Step-by-Step that represents the recording(s).

Other ideas for using the LITTLE Step-by-Step:

- **Record a series of messages to count from 1 to 10**
- **Read a short book**
- **Tell a knock-knock joke!**

Features

- Holds up to 4 minutes of messages
- Record a single message or series of messages
- Clear cover protects the symbols
- Switch input, multi-color button options
- Built-in microphone and speaker
- Uses one 9 volt battery

Guides and other resources

- Quick Start Guide (PDF)
- Product description
- Create symbol overlays for this device using the AbleNet Symbol Overlay app (Note, this app is available on the iPad provided during the trial)

Video

- Watch a video that demonstrates the Step-by-Step.

2 LIGHT-TECH ELECTRONIC AAC DEVICES (continued)

GoTalk 20+ Lite Touch

This electronic AAC device uses recorded speech and has extra touch sensitivity.

- Records and stores up to 100 messages across five levels (20 messages per level)
- Includes five core vocabulary symbol buttons for frequently used words or phrases that remain in a constant location across levels
- Twenty programmable buttons allow the user to personalize each level with vocabulary symbols and recordings of speech

Features

- Holds up to 100 messages
- Switch input
- Uses two AA batteries

Guides and other resources

- User Guide (PDF)
- Product description

Video

- GoTalk20+ Lite Touch demonstration

3 HIGH-TECH ELECTRONIC AAC DEVICES

iPad

The Apple iPad (10th generation) comes in a shockproof protective case with carry strap and convertible handle stand.

Apps

The iPad is pre-loaded with the AAC apps listed in this guide. These apps are customizable, full-featured AAC apps for individuals who have difficulty using their natural speech to communicate.

Features

- 10.9" iPad, 64 GB of memory
- USB-C charge cable

Guides and other resources

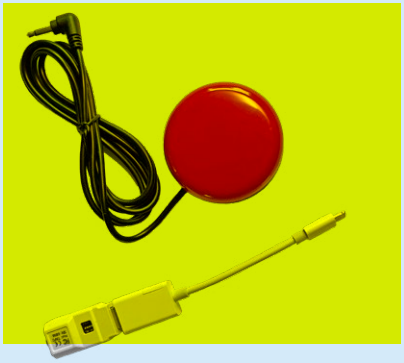
- User Guide
- Setting up Guided Access
- Touch Accommodations

Videos

- How to Use iPad 10th Generation

Tapio + Orby Switch

With just one switch, you can scan across apps on the home screen, launch the app you want, and navigate through its controls. Plug the Orby switch into the Tapio and connect it to the iPad—then you're ready to go.



Guides and other resources

- Tapio description (PDF)
- Tapio Get Started Guide (PDF)
- Tapio User Manual (PDF)

3 HIGH-TECH ELECTRONIC AAC DEVICES (continued)

Touchchat HD with WordPower App

This AAC app offers unique and robust sentence generation, pre-programmed messages, and spelling in English, Spanish, French, and Mandarin with Symbolstix. It includes customizable page sets like WP20 Simply, WP42, WP60, WP80, WP108, Vocab PC, MultiChat 15, and Communication Journey: Aphasia. Users can adjust button dwell and release times for accessibility. Files are easily shared through Airdrop, email, iTunes®, Dropbox™, or Google Drive™.

Guides and other resources

- App store description
- Quick Reference Full Manual (PDF)

Videos

- Start Your Engines
- Editing Buttons

TD SNAP App

This AAC app by Tobii Dynavox offers customizable, evidence-based page sets with both symbol-supported and text-based options using Picture Communication Symbols. Accessible via touch or switch on iPad, it supports sentence generation with core, fringe, and category words. It provides unique visual supports and social tools. Access setting adjustments include touch enter, touch exit, and hold time. Page sets include Core First, Motor Plan, Express, Text, Scanning and Aphasia. Files sync via mytobiidynavox.com.

Guides and other resources

- App store description
- Basics Full Manual (PDF)

Video

- TD SNAP in 10 Minutes

Proloquo2Go AAC App

This customizable, bilingual AAC app utilizes Symbolstix in a variety of page sets. It features real children's voices, and supports English, Spanish, French, and Dutch languages for seamless bilingual communication. Its Crescendo™ vocabulary grows with users from single words to full sentences. Features include Progressive Language, 23 grid sizes, and accessibility options like switch scanning and VoiceOver. Saving and sharing can be done via email, Airdrop, Dropbox™ and Google Drive™.

Guides and other resources

- App store description
- Overview of home screen tools, edit mode, and tools pop-up

Resources and video:

- Getting Started with Proloquo2Go
- Alternative Access for Proloquo2Go

3 HIGH-TECH ELECTRONIC AAC DEVICES (continued)

AAC Evaluation Genie App

The AAC Evaluation Genie app helps professionals decide how to customize most AAC systems (without recommending a particular system) for a specific student.

13 sub-tests provide information about the student's:

- **Vision skills:** Visual identification and discrimination and pointing skills
- **Vocabulary Knowledge:** Noun, function, verb, category, adjective, core words, unity icon patterns, picture description, and word prediction.
- **Expressive Symbol Use:** Picture description
- **Word Prediction Abilities**

The AAC Evaluation Genie app is used selecting an appropriate AAC system for the device trial and ongoing evaluation—not for communication.

Features

- This app provides helpful information about:
  - Type of vocabulary symbols that the student can use
  - Minimum symbols size needed
  - Maximum number of symbols per page
  - Best way to organize the vocabulary symbols to support student success
- This app can be used with direct selection or with switch access methods for students with fine motor limitations

Guides and other resources

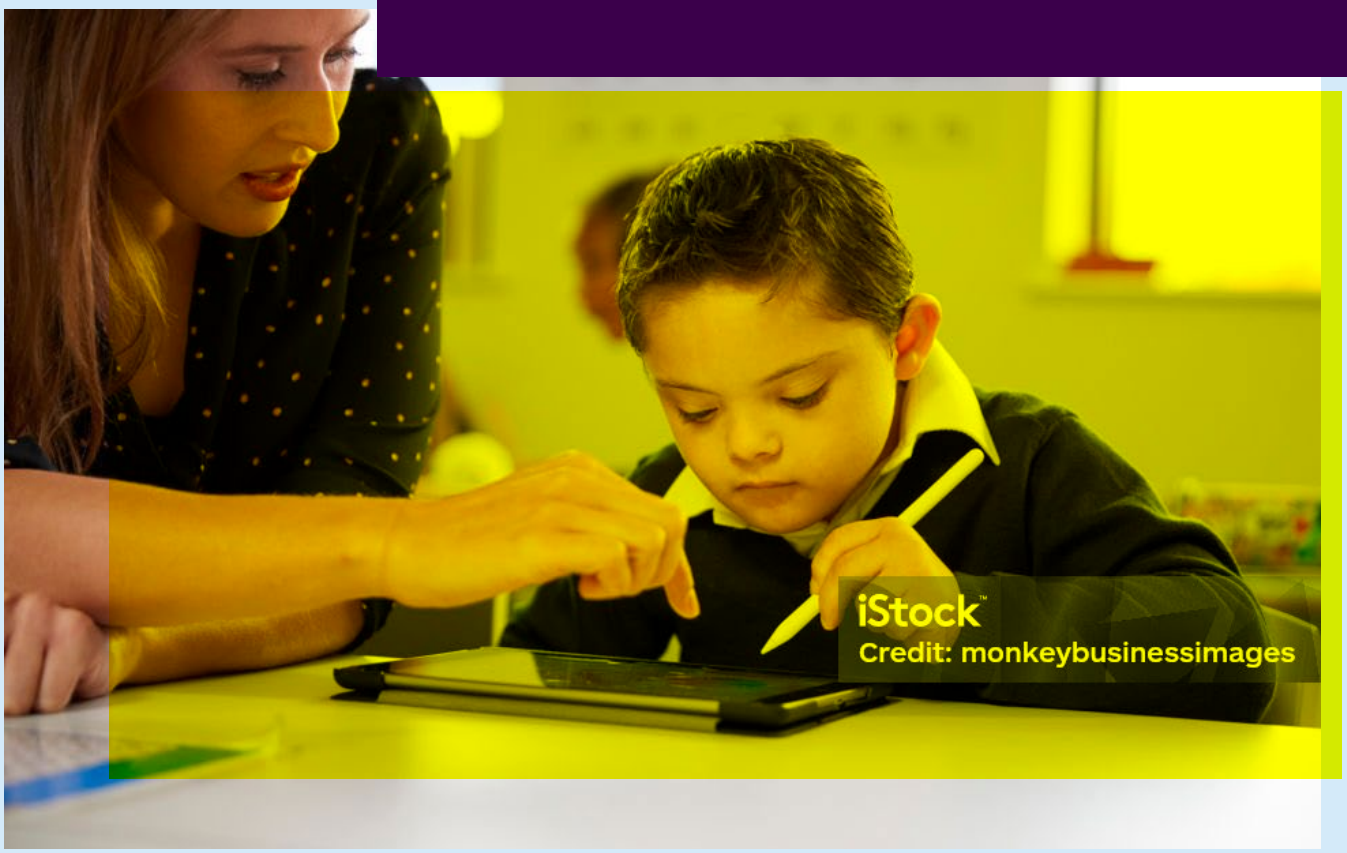
- App store description
- Reference Guide (PDF)

Video

- AAC Evaluation Genie

SECTION 2

Preparing for the Trial



Emergent Communicators: Identifying AAC Systems to Trial

Students who are emergent communicators need to learn the power of communication and how to use specific communication symbols meaningfully. As a part of learning to use AAC, you will be teaching the student to consistently use simple symbols (including objects, photographs, and/or picture symbols) to express themselves.

Based on the student's needs, use one or more of the three strategies below to help bring their communication to the next level. If you believe there are motor, sensory, or other reasons that your emergent communicator is having challenges learning to communicate, seek input from specialists to address the student's unique motor, hearing, vision, and/or opportunity needs.

STRATEGY 1 HELP A STUDENT LEARN TO ASSIGN MEANING TO SYMBOLS

For emergent communicators with limited communication functions and abilities, try using the **Talking Tiles** or **LITTLE Step-by-Step** devices to help jumpstart communication. These systems can help the student learn to assign meaning to symbols with motivating messages, and do not require the student to discriminate between symbols to use them.

Tips for use:

- Best practice suggests that a picture symbol should be placed on the AAC device so the student can start to learn the meaning of the picture symbol over time.
- Place the Talking Tile(s) or Step-by-Step in the student's environment. For example, place it in a preschool classroom at an engaging activity center or have it readily available during another highly engaging activity like snack time.
- When the student is first learning to use the device, they may not initially understand the symbol or spoken message. To get things started, the communication partner can model by activating the symbol/button and performing the action associated with the message. By responding and following the request or comment programmed on the device, the partner teaches the student the specific meaning of the symbol, the spoken word, and the power of communication.

Continued on next page

Tips for use (continued):

- Here are three examples for teaching the words “open”, “more” and “help” through placement of the device:
  - Place the device on a sensory table to model and communicate the message “Open”
  - Place the device in a pretend play area to model and communicate the message “More”
  - Place the device near a high shelf with toys to model and communicate the message “I need help”
- Here are three examples for teaching the words “go”, “more” and “help” during one of the student’s common routines:
  - Use wind-up toys and paused video clips to model and communicate the message “Go”
  - Use paused songs or video clips, an empty glass or a stopped swing to model and communicate the message “More”
  - Use closed containers during snack time or make smoothies to model and communicate the message “I need help”

STRATEGY 2

HELP A STUDENT WHO IS UNABLE TO READILY USE A DYNAMIC DISPLAY DEVICE EXPAND THEIR VOCABULARY AND COMMUNICATIVE FUNCTIONS

For a student who understands symbols and can convey messages but is unable to readily learn how to use a dynamic display device (such as an iPad), a device like the **GoTalk 20+ Lite Touch** can offer a way to teach expanded vocabulary and communicative functions.

Tips for use:

- Recorded speech may be more recognizable and motivating to activate, especially when it is recorded with the voice of a student who is similar to the student’s age, gender identity, and ethnicity.
- Symbol displays can be arranged with core words or context-specific pages which can be physically switched out when needed.
- A built-in keyguard can assist in teaching how to accurately activate a vocabulary symbol with a finger.

STRATEGY 3

HELP A STUDENT WHO IS JUST BEGINNING TO COMMUNICATE AND CAN USE A DYNAMIC DISPLAY DEVICE

An AAC device with a dynamic display and speech output, like an **iPad with AAC app** can be adapted in the set up to support individuals who are just beginning to communicate.

Tips for use:

Key adaptations to consider when trying these types of high tech AAC with emergent communicators include:

- **Symbol type:** AAC apps on iPads can be programmed with photographs and minimal symbols/ pages if needed to jumpstart success for an emergent communicator.
- **Progressive vocabulary growth:** As communication skills develop, the AAC system can be adjusted to introduce more complex vocabulary and sentence structures. This can be done through selecting a full page set of vocabulary, hiding symbols, then revealing them gradually as successful use occurs.
- **Context-based organization:** Symbols can be arranged for the student's specific environments, presenting relevant vocabulary based on the activity or location, like showing play items in the motor room or food on a snack table.
- **Visual scene displays (VSDs):** Scenes or photographs depicting specific familiar environments (like the free-play stations in the student's classroom) can be utilized that display "hotspots" for related messages. This can provide a meaningful context for communication of words and phrases.
- **Simple navigation:** The interface is designed with clear visual cues and easy-to-access buttons to facilitate selection by emerging communicators.

Symbolic Communicators: Identifying AAC Apps and Page Sets to Trial

Symbolic communicators understand that symbols can be used to convey meaning and messages. They may have a large or limited vocabulary. Use the steps below to identify AAC apps and page sets appropriate for the student and then evaluate them with the student.

As it relates to the devices in this Toolkit, the following steps are most relevant to use with the communication boards, GoTalk 20+ Lite Touch, and AAC apps.

STEP 1 DETERMINE APPS AND PAGE SETS TO TRIAL WITH THE STUDENT (Week 2)

What to do: Evaluate apps and page sets in order to identify which ones best enable the easiest production of messages that your student needs.

How to do it:

- Select a highly engaging activity (see page 26 for ideas) and identify 5-8 words or phrases that you can model for the student to produce during the activity.
- Select three apps, or three different page sets on a single app, to compare. The apps and page sets must match the student's language needs, motor skills, vision abilities, learning preferences, and they must have the vocabulary symbols available to produce the 5-8 words or phrases you have identified.
- Use Form 1: Initial Assessment of Apps and Page Sets to evaluate and compare these three AAC apps, or page sets within an AAC app. *Note: The student does not need participate in this comparison.*

STEP 2 TRIAL THE APPS AND PAGE SETS WITH THE STUDENT (typically Weeks 3 & 4)

What to do: Trial the most appropriate apps/page sets identified in Step 1 with the student to determine which ones require the least prompting and may be appropriate to trial further.

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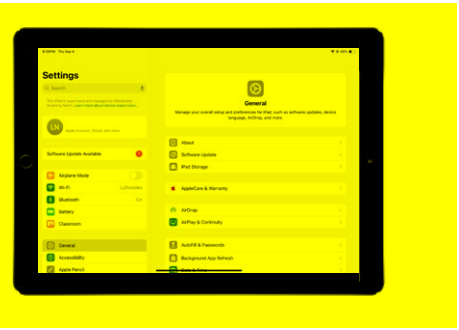
How to Do It:

- Connect with IEP team members to find times to trial the apps or page sets with the student during a highly engaging activity.
- During the activity, use Form 2: Evaluation of Apps and Page Sets with the Student to compare the student's performance when using different AAC apps and page sets.
- If the student has difficulty using the app or page set, make adjustments to make it easier for the student. Refer to Addressing Challenges to AAC Consideration (page 34) for ideas to adapt the AAC system for motor, self-regulation, vision, and engagement needs.

Setting Up iPad Features for AAC

Learn about important steps in setting up the iPad for successful AAC use in the steps below.

For information about how to set up and customize page sets and symbols on individual apps on the iPad, see the information and links for each app in the AAC Device Guide (page 9).



1 TURNING ON GUIDED ACCESS

Guided Access is important for AAC users because it allows the iPad to be locked to a single app. This prevents accidental or intentional switching to other apps. When Guided Access is turned on, the home button does not let the user exit from the AAC app.

Guided Access can help the student and team focus on learning to use the AAC app for communication. Without guided access, students have access to games, the camera, YouTube, and more, which can be distracting to the student and can make it challenging to complete AAC app trials on the iPad.

How to turn on Guided Access:

1. Go to: Settings > Accessibility > Guided Access
2. Turn on Guided Access.
3. Tap Passcode Settings to set a 6-digit passcode. Choose a passcode you can remember and write it down.
4. Enter and re-enter the passcode.
5. Open the AAC app.
6. Triple-press the home button (tap 3 times quickly!) to open Guided Access.
7. Tap Start to turn on Guided Access at the top of the screen.
8. Test Guided Access to make sure it was successfully enabled. To do so, click the home button to exit the AAC app. If Guided Access is on, you will be unable to exit the AAC app without re-entering the 6-digit passcode.
9. To exit Guided Access, triple-click the side button, enter the 6-digit passcode, tap End.

For more information, see Guided Access to Support AAC on the iPad from Tech Owl.

Continued on next page

2 LOCKING (AND UNLOCKING) THE EDIT BUTTON

Once you're ready to trial an AAC app with the student, be sure to lock the editing button within the app. This prevents students from accidentally changing settings or erasing vocabulary from the AAC system and ensures that the app remains accessible to the student. The process to lock the editing button is different for each AAC app, so refer to the directions to lock the edit button for the AAC app that you're trialing with your student.

3 CHOOSING OR RECORDING AN APPROPRIATE VOICE

A person's voice is an important part of their identity and it is important choice when using AAC.

Here are some things to consider:

- Involve the student when picking out the AAC system's voice and prioritize their preference.
- Consider the student's age, gender identity, ethnicity, language, and communication needs.
- When choosing a voice on AAC apps that produce synthesized speech, aim for a voice that seems natural and comfortable for the student.
- When recording speech into an AAC app, you may want to ask to record the voice of a peer who sounds like the student. Whenever possible, let the student choose the person who will record the voice on the AAC system.

Guide to Alternative Access

Access methods (also called selection techniques) describe how people make selections on their AAC system to indicate what they need to communicate.

Some people use alternative access methods when, for example, using a finger to make a direct selection on a touchscreen is not possible. Indirect selection, such as scanning with a switch, may be the best way for a student with a physical limitation to operate AAC. Alternative access methods can be used with non-electronic and electronic AAC systems. Use information in this guide to better understand various types of access methods and how you could use them to support your student.

DEFINITIONS OF KEY TERMS

Direct selection:	Operation of an AAC device by selecting target with a body part, stylus, or other tool. ***Examples:*** *Finger pointing, heading pointing with a laser, head tracking with a metallic dot or facial movement, eye tracking*
Indirect selection:	Operation of an AAC device by selecting target from a set of choices. This includes auditory scanning, visual scanning, and partner-assisted scanning. ***Examples:*** *Activating a switch to select symbol when moving cursor, light or sound lands on that symbol; smiling to select symbol when partner points to the target symbol*
Pointing:	A type of direct selection made by pointing to the AAC with a body part. ***Examples:*** *Selecting with finger, stylus, eyes, laser pointer*
Tracking:	A type of direct selection made directly by technology that detects and translates head or eye movements. ***Examples:*** *An optical sensor in the AAC system tracks the movement of a reflective dot worn on a forehead or glasses and converts it to selections on the screen; an optical sensor in iPad's Face ID, tracks head movements to control the controls on the screen cursor. Specific facial expressions, such as a smile or raised eyebrows, can then be used to make a selection.*

Continued on next page

DEFINITIONS OF KEY TERMS (continued)

Scanning:	A type of indirect selection in which a target is selected from a set of choices as an indicator scans each choice. This method is often used when direct selection is difficult due to physical disability. ***Examples:*** *A switch press to start the highlighting of symbols to scan on the AAC system, and a second switch press stops the scan and selects that symbol. Two switches are used, where one switch starts the scan and the other switch stops the scan and selects the symbol.*
Partner assisted scanning:	A type of indirect selection in which a target is selected from a set of choices which a partner scans by showing, pointing and/or speaking the names of each item. The AAC user indicates the choice using a pre-determined signal (like an eye blink). The partner then confirms the selection made by the AAC user. ***Examples:*** *Eye blink, eye contact, smile, vocalization*

COMPARISON OF DIRECT AND INDIRECT SELECTION

Direct and indirect access methods that are used to operate AAC systems are described below:

	DIRECT SELECTION (Pointing/tracking)	INDIRECT SELECTION (Scanning)
Access method	Direct interaction with the AAC device	Indirect interaction, with symbols presented sequentially
User action	Pointing, touching, moving head, moving eyes	Activating a switch or making a choice when the desired item is highlighted
Examples	Finger, hand, eye gaze, stylus, head tracking	Switch scanning, partner-assisted scanning
Cognitive demands	Less cognitively demanding	Can be more cognitively demanding to coordinate track, wait, and activate
Physical demands	May be difficult for people with severe fine motor limitations	Used when direct selection is not possible
Efficiency	Quicker activation	Requires more time to produce a message

RESOURCES

Alternative access

- **The AAC Center Moodle Course on Alternative Access:** This course provides a self-paced introduction to alternative access, covering key principles, the need for a team approach, multiple examples and tips for decision making.
- **Alternative Access for the iPad:** For a brief introduction to iPad alternative access methods, this webinar from CALL Scotland presents ideas to address the activation challenges of individuals with significant physical challenges. (30:01 minutes)

Switch scanning

- **Switch Site Location and Positioning Chart (PDF):** This chart presents switch site options organized by movement, position, and location. In addition, benefits and challenges are identified.
- **Stepping Stones to Switch Access (PDF):** This article lays out the types of switch use and scanning with an emphasis on gradual skill-building to shape successful use of switches. The author highlights the need to explore multiple switch sites and consider factors such as gravity, positioning, and motor challenges. Numerous engaging activities are included.
- **Tarheel Gameplay:** This collection of free and easy to play games includes speech and accessibility by using 1-3 switches. These are best utilized from the Chrome Browser.

This link is re-directing to a new url/page that has a different name. Do you want to update the text and link?

Partner-assisted scanning

- **Getting Familiar with Partner-Assisted Scanning:** This introductory video by Praactically Speaking explains what a partner scanning system looks like and how to teach a student to use it. (9:57 minutes)
- **Partner Assisted Scanning:** This training video by The Angelman's Syndrome Foundation provides an introduction to the topic with illustrations of the different scanning types and how to teach this selection method. (54:54 minutes)

SECTION 3

Activities, Strategies and Tips

Tips for Success When Introducing AAC

Students need access to a robust vocabulary system with core words, fringe vocabulary, and chances for novel expression. Limiting vocabulary based on perceived ability can hinder language growth.

AAC best practices include supports like modeling, aided language input, and consistent motor planning to promote development. Use these tips to offer a full range of vocabulary options with support for your student.

- **Try both the non-electronic and electronic AAC systems in the Toolkit with your student.** Even emergent communicators can benefit from electronic AAC technologies! Check out Emergent Communicators: Identifying AAC Systems to Trial (page 15).

- **Never underestimate the potential of your student!**

- **Provide core and fringe vocabulary words to your student.**
Learn more about core and fringe vocabulary words at praacticalaac.org/strategy/join-together-core-fringe-vocabulary/

- **Base your choice of symbol size, as well as the total number of vocabulary symbols available at one time, on what the student can successfully see and select.**

- **Start with the smallest symbol size that the student can select and the maximum number of symbols on a page that the student can manage.** At first, it may work well to cover some symbols on non-electronic AAC system or to "hide" some symbols on electronic AAC systems. See the device manuals and videos in the AAC Device Guide (page 9) to learn how to hide symbols on specific electronic AAC systems.

- **Progressively add more symbols.** As the student becomes familiar with the AAC, uncover or "unhide" vocabulary symbols and reveal them a few at a time (see example below). With practice, more symbols can be revealed. Your student can benefit from motor memory and motor planning when you keep the familiar symbols in the same place while more symbols are added. For resources on the importance of motor memory and motor planning, see the AAC Tech OWL at aaccommunity.net/ccc/motor-planning/.

Highly Engaging Activity Ideas

Encouraging students to communicate requires that you introduce and trial the AAC systems during highly engaging activities that promote natural interactions. Such activities are critical to successful AAC consideration. In order to engage and motivate the student in communication, the activities should be focused on the student's interests and passions. Creating engaging activities can take extra work, but the rewards in engagement and interaction are worth it.

The following activities can provide ideas that you can customize based on your student's interests. They are organized by age groups: Young Child, Elementary (grades K-5), Secondary (typically ages 11-21).

Note: In addition to having highly engaging activities, it is important that you use evidence-based Strategies to Boost Success with AAC. Learn more about these strategies on page 32.

YOUNG CHILD

1 Large Motor Play: Swinging, slides, wind-up toys, riding toys

Use a great big expectant, "Ready, Set (pause)" then model "**go**" and pause to let student touch "**go**" when they are:

- On the swing
- At the top of a slide
- On a riding toy
- Before releasing a windup toy

This can be especially powerful when paired with music, like the "We go and stop" song.

Core words to model:

- go
- stop
- help me
- want more
- my turn

2 Singing and Song Play

Sing or play preschool songs. Pause song to model, "**more**" to start the music again. Pause again to take turns for dancing and model, "**my**" turn. Offer stuffed toys to hold while singing, and model, I "**want**" to choose.

Song lists:

- Party Freeze Dance Songs
- Going on a Bear Hunt - THE KIBOOMERS Preschool Songs for Circle Time
- 30 Bilingual Nursery Rhymes to Learn and Sing

Core words to model:

- go
- want more
- I like
- my turn
- stop
- I want

YOUNG CHILD (continued)

3 Silly activities

Silly activities are very motivating for many young students. Pick funny activities that make kids laugh, like:

- Wearing silly light up glasses
- Wearing a lamp shade on your head
- Playing with party blowers

You can model, "**more**" to continue, "**help**" to put on, and "**want**" to choose.

Core words to model:

- I want glasses
- open it
- help me
- want more
- I like it
- my turn

4 Bubble Play

Offer bubble play with pauses.

- Model, "**want**" to request bubble jar and different wands.
- Model "**help**" to open, dip.
- Model "**more**" to fill bubble jar.
- Model "**my**" and "**your**" turn when sharing.

Core words to model:

- I want
- help me
- want more
- I like it
- my turn
- your turn

5 Sensory Activities

Many young students love to touch and feel moldable things: playdough, slime, fake snow, silly putty. Offer small amounts with pauses.

- Model "**more**" for a bigger clump
- Model "**want**" to choose color or tool
- Model "**help**" to use a tool

Core words to model:

- I want
- help me
- want more
- I like it
- my turn
- your turn

YOUNG CHILD (continued)

6 Snack

Offer a variety of snacks out of reach of student. You can:

- Model "**help**" to open, pour
- Model "**more**" to fill dish
- Model "**no/don't want**" when offering an unpreferred or silly item
- Model "**like**" when eating a favorite food

Core words to model:

- I want + snack
- It looks like you like it!
- Do you need help?
- Do you want more or are you all done?
- I don't want

ELEMENTARY-AGE

1 Video Clips

Use short videos to teach core words. Use the strategy MODEL + PAUSE. Watch a short portion of the video, pause, then model a core word and wait for the student to take a turn.

Related resources:

- Using Animated Shorts in Language Therapy with AAC Learners from Rachel Madel
- Animated Shorts for wordless videos

Extend it:

Take screenshots as you pause, then use the photos to talk about what you can see.

Core words to model:

On, not, go, big, more, see, can, help, open, play, where, feel, want, in, out, have, stop

2 Dressing Up and Selfies

All you need are silly hats, feather boas, crazy glasses and mustaches to try on! Sit in front of a mirror and take selfie photos as you go.

Related resources:

- Strategies for engaging students from Assistiveware.com

Core words to model:

- I want that
- put it on / take it off
- looks good/bad/funny
- go (to signal taking photo)
- I do it
- not that
- get (something) different
- look in there (mirror)

ELEMENTARY (continued)

3 Interactive Book Reading

Use interesting picture books for modeling with high repetition of core words, simple sentence structure.

Picture book recommendations:

- Speechy Musings
- Communication Community
- Repetitive books

Animated read-aloud books:

- Storyline Online
- Celebrities Reading Children's Books
- The Way I Feel
- Monarch Reader

Digital picture books in multiple languages:

- Unite for Literacy

Core words to model:

On, not, go, big, more, see, can, help, open, play, where, feel, want, in, out, have, stop

4 What's in My Bag?

Ask the student to bring in a few favorite personal items or offer favorite action figures to choose from. Have the student put it in a mystery bag and give clues to classmates by using words on the AAC system.

Related resources:

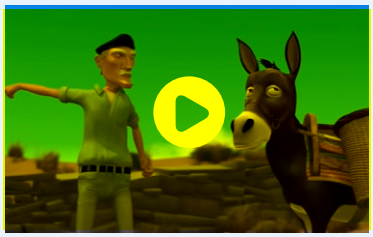
- Mystery Box with AAC Modeling

Core words to model:

Put, in, big, small, hot, cold, happy, sad, funny, scary, old, favorite, colors

SECONDARY

1 Movie or Video Clips



Use trailers from student's favorite movies to describe characters, songs, or scenes. Watch, then pause the clip.

Tip: Slow down the video in YouTube, insert an expectant pause to let the student comment. Model things to say, then pause again.

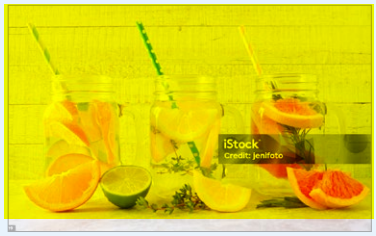
Related resources:

- Using Animated Shorts in Language Therapy with AAC Learners Blog
- Wordless Shorts by Activity Tailor
- Simon's Cat
- Mariza—The Stubborn Donkey

Core words to model:

Big, small, hot, cold, happy, sad, funny, scary, old, favorite, colors

2 Infused Water Tasting



Make a variety of infused waters to taste them. Use core words together while cooking.

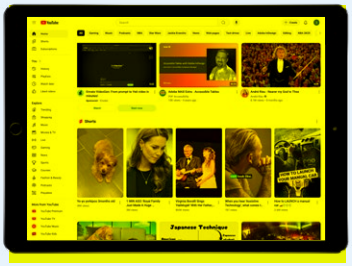
Related resource:

- Infused Water Activity from AAC Language Lab

Core words to model:

Like, in, on, get, more, drink, fast, slow, colors, favorite, stir

3 YouTube Screenshots



For a teen with a special interest, use that interest to engage. Search YouTube for their favorite topics. Watch a short portion of the video, pausing regularly and taking screenshots. Use these screenshots to talk about what you see. You can extend the activity by making a book of the photos in Pictello or Google slides, or PowerPoint.

Core words to model:

- I want that
- I like that
- not that
- find it
- stop (when pausing video)
- I do it (when taking photo)
- go (start video)

SECONDARY (continued)

4 Talking Avatars

Some students may be easily engaged by the opportunity to make an avatar of themselves. These avatars are talking version of themselves that they can share with friends and family.

Related resources:

- DoppelMe: Create cartoon-like avatars with opportunities to choose clothes, hairstyles, and backgrounds. Opportunities to discuss feelings and emotions arise when selecting facial expressions.
- Voki: Make realistic-looking talking avatars while providing many opportunities for self-expression, vocabulary use, and dialogue.

Core words to model:

- I like that
- not that
- Silly, cool, happy, glasses, hair, make-up, jeans, tattoos

5 Arts and Crafts

Show students arts and crafts ideas on sites like Pinterest or YouTube.

Let them comment on activities then choose something to create.

Core words to model:

- Stop
- like
- that one
- more
- scroll up
- scroll down

Other AAC activity ideas from PrAACtical AAC Blog:

- Throwback Thursday: Engaging AACtivities for AAC Learning
- Engaging Learners with Complex Bodies
- How I Do It: Putting the Fun Back in FUNctional
- PrAACtical Supports for AAC Learners: AT Recipes for Success – Sensorimotor Activities
- Why We Love AAC Language Experience Activities

Strategies to Boost Success with AAC

Effective implementation is crucial for successful AAC consideration. Learn about five evidence-based strategies to ensure that accurate decisions can be made regarding a student's ability to benefit from an AAC system.

1 ENGAGE AND MOTIVATE

Success with AAC happens when we create interactions around a student's personal interests. What makes the student laugh? What activities does the student seek out? What motivates the student?

Observe the student and work with the team to find highly engaging activities that give the student opportunities to communicate. Create activities in which the student will be motivated to communicate. Use a [illegible]st vocabulary selection tool to identify student interests.

Related resources:

- Using Positive Reinforcement to Support AAC Learners
- On Motivation and AAC

2 MODEL AND PAUSE

Students need to learn how to communicate using the AAC system. Adults should use the AAC system to communicate while simultaneously speaking. This is referred to as modeling. After modeling, pause to allow the student to follow your example. Pausing lets the student process the information at their own pace without being pressured to respond, promotes active participation, and shows the student a starting point to initiate communication using AAC.

Providing repeated models helps students learn new vocabulary for different purposes and in new situations. The "model and pause without expectation" strategy is extremely powerful and, over time, is a very effective way to teach AAC.

Related videos:

- Modeling with AAC
- How to Model AAC for a Child: Introducing a Communication Device
- Walking the Dog with Proloquo2Go

Related resource:

- Dos and Don'ts of AAC (PDF)

3 FOLLOW THE STUDENT'S LEAD

Students show us their interests by what they watch, the gestures and facial expressions they produce, and what they choose to do throughout the day. When the student shows us their interests, we can follow their lead by engaging with enthusiasm, expressing the student's communicative intent by speaking and simultaneously modeling on the AAC system, and pausing expectantly to allow the student a turn to try the AAC system.

Related videos:

- Following Your Child's Lead
- How to Follow a Child's Lead

4 CREATE A NEED TO COMMUNICATE

Think of fun activities that will create a need for communication. These activities should engage the student and create a need for the student to want to use the AAC system to communicate at different times throughout their day. Provide a model to show the student how to select a word or message to meet their need before frustration occurs.

Here are some ideas that may create the need to communicate:

- Need for help (wind up toys, a snack bag or tight lid that is hard to open)
- Stop a fun action (like a swing) to create a need for "go" or "more"
- Be playful (try pranks and tricks, give an empty cup of juice, put a whoopee cushion on a chair)
- Make mistakes (put a shoe on your hand instead of your foot, get salt instead of chocolate to make cocoa)

Related video:

- How to Use Sabotage to Teach AAC

5 HONOR EVERY AND ANY COMMUNICATION ATTEMPT

When students don't have a way to communicate that everybody can understand, adults can assign meaning to the student's gestures, expressions, and utterances. By responding and assigning meaning to all of the student's communication attempts, the student can start learning that communication has power.

When adults presume that the student has potential, they provide more learning opportunities. For example, when a student smiles at you, you can say, "I see that smile! Hello to you, too!" For students just learning an AAC system and who touch random words, we can say, "I heard you, Tony," or "That's a funny thing to say!" This response can validate and encourage the student's efforts.

When students start to learn an AAC system, they may select the wrong vocabulary, but you can make it meaningful. You can say, "Croissants? We don't have croissants! That is silly!" Comment on what the child produces and continue the interaction by asking clarifying questions.

Related resource:

- Learn how to attribute meaning with your AAC user

Addressing Challenges to AAC Consideration

Students with AAC needs have varying levels of cognitive, motor, vision, and sensory processing skills that require an individualized approach.

- Some students may require different access methods (e.g., keyguards, eye gaze, head tracking, switches) to assist with physical challenges.
- Others may have visual and auditory needs that require adaptations like high-contrast or tactile vocabulary symbols.
- Students with self-regulation and attention challenges may require specialized device settings and routines to develop functional use.
- Students with cognitive delays may have challenges with understanding and navigating complex AAC page sets.
- All students may benefit from simplified pages of vocabulary symbols that slowly introduce more vocabulary over time.

To address challenges to AAC it is important to:

- **Collaborate with specialists**
  Work closely with speech-language pathologists, occupational therapists, physical therapists, vision and hearing specialists to develop adaptations to meet students' unique needs. If your IEP team needs more expertise to address the unique challenges of your student, contact an AAC professional for input (see Minnesota AAC Evaluation Providers).
- **Provide training and support**
  Ensure that communication partners receive adequate training on the AAC system and strategies to effectively support the student.

Use the information on the following pages to help address unique student challenges, such as motor, self-regulation, vision, and engagement, during the AAC Consideration trial process.

1 MOTOR

Inaccurate selection—Accidentally selects a different vocabulary symbol than intended	**To shape effective pointing for strength & coordination:** • Try a keyguard • Try a stylus • Try a mitten with an index finger hole cut out **Adjust the position of the AAC system:** • Angle of AAC • Position of system (right-left, height, lap vs desk) • Reduce glare **Change iPad Accessibility Setting-Touch Accommodations:** • Set up "Speak on Release". This helps to ignore multiple finger touches on the screen. It can be helpful for users who can't reliably isolate a pointer finger. **Try alternative access (e.g. eye pointing, scanning with a partner or switch)** • See more information in the Guide to Alternative Access on page 21.
Repeated movements or tremors—Reduced accuracy due to motor movements	**To accommodate single-touch selection challenges, change iPad Accessibility Setting–Touch Accommodations:** • Turn on "Ignore Repeat" and set the duration in which multiple touches are treated as a single touch.
Can't release or remove hand from touchscreen when needed	**Change iPad Accessibility Setting–Touch Accommodations:** • Increase release time on the iPad
Doesn't know how to use a switch	See the Guide to Alternative Access (page 21) for information about how to teach scanning
For additional assistance:	Identify your **school district's resource specialist for occupational therapy** and **teacher of the physically impaired** to help identify ways to address challenges encountered in this area.

2 SELF-REGULATION

Repeatedly presses buttons on device that appear to be random

Try to understand why this is happening. Repetition is a natural part of exploration. Addressing the motivation behind this behavior is the best way forward. It's important to observe patterns and contexts to better understand intent. Is the student anxious? Excited? Seeking interaction? Curious?

Does the student have enough device vocabulary to talk about other topics? Try to find out what words they need to communicate their real intentions and interests:

- Is the environment too loud and they are stimming to block out the commotion? Try adding a phrase like "Too loud".
- Are they bored? Try adding a phrase like, "Can I have a turn?"
- Has there been a change that triggered confusion or anxiety? Try adding a phrase like "When are we done?" or "I feel anxious".

Student may be communicating something while also repeatedly pressing buttons.

- What patterns do you notice? What's happening in the environment? What emotion do you think the user is experiencing?
- When students seem to "misuse" their device, they're often communicating in the only way they can at the moment. Model the appropriate use of the system and provide responsive supports.

Try adjusting iPad Accessibility Setting-Touch Accommodations:

- Increase "Hold Duration" so the student has to hold the button down longer to make the message speak.

n on "Ignore Repeat".

Continually presses buttons when it is time to listen to others

Teach appropriate times to activate the device's buttons

- Give the student other times during the day to explore the symbols on the device to press and listen to all of its messages.
- Acknowledge the communication attempt, then turn the device face down after showing a "Time to Listen" visual. Combine with a countdown strategy to encourage understanding when it is time to listen, and not use the AAC system. *Note: Use this strategy with caution and in collaboration with the student, especially if they are beginning communicators. These strategies should support, not limit, access.*

Teach the student to "whisper" with the device if they need to talk in class.

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2 SELF-REGULATION (continued)

Presses buttons so fast that they are hard to process or understand	• Model a calm, steady pace and acknowledge when the student communicates in a way that's easier to understand: "I like how you said that slowly—I heard it clearly!" • Add an increased dwell time so they have to hold the button down longer, which slows them down • Consider alternative sensory stimulation for the student. Consult an occupational therapist for suggestions.
For additional assistance:	Identify your **school district's resource specialist for autism and/or behavior** to help identify ways to address challenges encountered in this area.

3 VISION

Unable to accurately locate and activate buttons	• Reduce the number of symbols presented on a single page • Decrease crowding of symbols by increasing the spacing between symbols • Utilize tactiles to increase access to words (could be as simple as different raised adhesive symbols) • Position symbols to enable use of touch cues (e.g., arrange symbols on outside edges of the screen) • Auditory Fishing • Consider a keyguard or touchguide
Unable to see and/or recognize symbols	• Try utilizing symbols with high contrast between background & symbol (i.e. black background with red, yellow & green symbols) • Try utilizing 3-D symbols • Try utilizing real pictures in place of symbols if the team has determined this is appropriate for concept development and understanding
Unable to accurately target and activate symbols	• Determine how many symbols are optimal on an array and the most effective visual arrangement of the symbols. • Try reducing the number of symbols to a small set per page and display in a series of interconnected pages.

Continued on next page

3 VISION (continued)

Unable to find and accurately locate symbols on an iPad	• On the iPad, in Accessibility Settings, go to "Tap Assistance" and select "Use Final Touch" Location. • Try utilizing auditory feedback through accessibility settings as deemed appropriate.
Unable to see symbols	• Consider a device with backlighting of the display. • Consider using real objects or partial objects with a voice output device.
For additional assistance:	Identify your **school district's resource specialist for vision** to help identify ways to address challenges encountered in this area.

4 ENGAGEMENT

Does not use or initiate with the AAC system	• Engage in lots of highly motivating activities • Focus on communication around students' personal interests • Try adding silly words/phrases that get a big reaction • Give a reinforcer preference assessment to learn more about individual interests
Uses limited vocabulary or functions on AAC system	Invite a peer to join in the engaging activities when AAC is present with the student. Social interactions can increase motivation of the student in the activities and in using the AAC when peers are involved. For tips on facilitating positive interactions with peers around AAC, see A Guide to Supporting Peer Interaction for Students who Use AAC.
Doesn't interact or shows no interest	• Interaction may look different for each student and lack of obvious interest in the AAC system doesn't mean the student isn't paying attention or learning. • Keep modeling by speaking and selecting symbols on the system as you talk. • Be responsive to all forms of communication-eye gaze, body language, facial expressions, gestures, vocalizations AND pair them with AAC modeling to build connections. • Make silly, obviously wrong or unpreferred choices to model use of words like "I don't want", "no way", "silly!" that provoke a big or funny response • Increase your affect with big reactions to show student how socially engaging use of the AAC system can be • Demonstrate the power of communication by showing the result of using a word/phrases
For additional assistance:	Identify your **school district's resource specialist for developmental disabilities** to help identify ways to address challenges encountered in this area.

Appendix

Links to Data Collection Forms and Outcomes Summary Form

Use the links and QR codes below to access the forms to use during the AAC Consideration Toolkit trial period:

FORM 1: Initial Assessment of AAC Apps and Page Sets

https://mn.gov/admin/star/linkTBD

FORM 2: Evaluation of AAC Apps and Page Sets with the Student

https://mn.gov/admin/star/linkTBD

FORM 3: AAC Use in the Student's Natural Environments

https://mn.gov/admin/star/linkTBD

FORM 4: Outcomes Summary of the AAC Consideration Trials

https://mn.gov/admin/star/linkTBD

Note: If you are viewing the Guidebook in a binder provided by the Minnesota STAR Program, blank samples of the forms listed here follow this page in the Guidebook. Make copies of these pages for your use, or use the QR codes shown here to download the forms, which can be filled out electronically, or printed and filled out by hand.

Glossary of terms

Non-electronic AAC:
AAC that does not use electricity. Examples include communication books, pictures, photographs, and writing.

Electronic light-tech AAC:
AAC that uses electricity with digitized speech output and static displays. Examples include single message devices and recordable devices with multiple levels.

Electronic high-tech AAC:
AAC that uses electricity with synthesized and digitized capabilities and dynamic displays. Examples include tablets, computers and dedicated speech generating devices.

Page Sets or Pages:
Page Sets are the layouts that language, vocabulary, and communication functions are organized and presented on AAC dynamic displays. An AAC device can have multiple "pages" or screens. Each page can be designed to address specific communication needs or situations and link together.

Digitized Speech:
Pre-recorded, natural-sounding audio messages that are stored and played back by a speech-generating device.

Synthesized Speech:
Technology-generated speech, created from text or symbols for the production of original messages.

Access Method:
An access method or selection technique is the method an individual uses to control or interact with their Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) device. Examples include direct methods like touching a screen, switch access, or [illegible]control, and indirect methods like scanning where the user selects an item from a sequence.

Model: [illegible]ou want to define "Model"? There was no text for this term in the latest edits document

Direct selection:
AAC system operated by selecting target with a body part, stylus, or other tool. Examples: finger pointing, heading pointing with a laser, head tracking with a metallic dot or facial movement, eye tracking.

Indirect selection:
AAC system operated by selecting target from a set of choices. This includes auditory scanning, visual scanning, and partner-assisted scanning Examples: activates switch to select symbol when moving cursor, light or sound lands on that symbol, smiles to select symbol when partner points to the target symbol.

Pointing:
A type of direct selection made by pointing to the AAC with a body part. Examples: selects with finger, stylus, eyes, laser pointer.

Continued on next page

Glossary of terms (continued)

Tracking:
A type of direct selection made directly by technology that detects and translates head or eye movements. Examples: optical sensor in the AAC system tracks the movement of a reflective dot worn on a forehead or glasses and converts it to selections on the screen, an optical sensor in iPad's Face ID, tracks head movements to control the controls on the screen cursor. Specific facial expressions, such as a smile or raised eyebrows, can then be used to make a selection.

Dynamic Display:
A dynamic display is a computerized communication system where the screen changes on activation to show different pages or categories of symbols, icons, or text, allowing for a large amount of vocabulary and flexible message generation.

Static Display:
A static display refers to a device or system where the symbols, pictures, or text remain fixed and unchanged on the screen or overlay, with all available messages shown at once rather than through changing pages.

Scanning:
A type of indirect selection in which a target is selected from a set of choices as an indicator scans each choice. This method is often used when direct selection is difficult due to physical disability. Examples: a switch press to start the highlighting of symbols to scan on the AAC system, and a second switch press stops the scan and selects that symbol. Two switches are used, where one switch starts the scan and the other switch stops the scan and selects the symbol.

Partner Assisted Scanning:
A type of indirect selection in which a target is selected from a set of choices which a partner scans by showing, pointing and/or speaking the names of each item. The AAC user indicates the choice using a pre-determined signal (like an eye blink). The partner then confirms the selection made by the AAC user. Examples: eye blink, eye contact, smile, vocalization.

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