



# Handy Handouts®

Free informational handouts for educators, parents, and students

## Tips to Help Your Child Communicate with Their AAC Device

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*Trying to help your child communicate with their AAC device but not sure how? Here are some easy tips to help you and your child feel more comfortable with their AAC device.*

### Get Familiar with the Device



As a caregiver, it is important to spend some time learning the device. How do you switch between pages? How do you add or delete a word? How do you add personalized pictures? Becoming familiar with the device will allow you to feel more confident using the device. In turn, this will make your child more confident too.

### Always Provide Access and Be Consistent



It is important that your child always has access to their AAC device. Your child's AAC device is their form of communication—it is very important that they always have access to it, just as you always have access to your voice. It is also beneficial to be consistent with your use of the device. You should be using the device multiple times every day. Incorporating the device into your everyday routines (e.g. meal times, morning/night routines, play time, outdoor time, etc.) is an easy way to get mass practice in your child's natural environment. Your child will learn that the device is a normal part of their everyday routines when they see it consistently used throughout the day.



### Begin by Modeling Core Vocabulary



You can begin using the device to model core vocabulary during your child's daily routines. Core vocabulary is the vocabulary that appears most often in a child's environment. Core vocabulary includes words like "more," "all done," "go," "drink," "help," "play," etc. Use daily routines such as eating a meal or playing with a toy to model these core words.

### Add in Fringe Vocabulary



In addition to modeling core vocabulary, you should also model fringe vocabulary. Fringe vocabulary includes words that are specific to an individual or topic. This could include your child's favorite snacks, songs, books, etc. It is important to model both core and fringe vocabulary so that your child can communicate their specific wants, thoughts, and opinions.



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## Provide Opportunities



After you have modeled vocabulary on the AAC device, create opportunities for your child to independently use their AAC

device. Examples of providing opportunities include reading a book together, playing with a favorite toy, requesting preferred snacks, requesting preferred shows or music, and discussing morning/nighttime routines. Providing opportunities throughout the day gives your child a chance to use their device in different settings and for different purposes which can lead to better generalization and confidence with the device.



### Related Handy Handouts®:

[91 – Augmentative and Alternative Communication: Frequently Asked Questions](#)

[134 – Accommodating Autistic Children Within an Inclusive Setting](#)

### Resources:

"Language Opportunities for Using AAC at Home." AssistiveWare. Accessed May 10th, 2023.  
<https://www.assistiveware.com/blog/language-opportunities-using-aac-home>

"What are Fringe Words?" Communication Community. Accessed May 30th, 2023. <https://www.communicationcommunity.com/what-are-fringe-words/>

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