HOW TO HELP: PROMPTING & MODELING FOR AAC USERS
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TURN IT INTO COMMUNICATION
When you get a new communication device that you’ve never seen, are you able to fully communicate without time to learn?

On a familiar device, can you fluently express every idea you know or want to say?

SOME REASONS AAC FAILS
1. Unrealistic expectations
2. Others reject the device
3. Others refuse to use the device with the individual
4. Others do not do their part in making the device available
5. Others refuse to follow through with AAC objectives
6. Too few individuals who communicate with the individual voluntarily
7. Others feel they do not need the device to communicate effectively
8. Partners haven’t been taught how to interact (inadequate conversational support)
9. Insufficient emotional support of the device
10. Not enough opportunities to see other users

SOME REASONS AAC FAILS (CONT.)
11. Insufficient number of quality settings for functional use
12. Not enough reasons to use device over the course of the day
13. Not enough opportunities to use the device throughout the day
14. Insufficient/inappropriate vocabulary
15. Programming difficulty
16. Rate of communication is too slow
17. Too much time to learn
18. Technical issues

WHAT’S THE DIFFERENCE IN MODELING AND PROMPTING?

Modeling: Demonstrating how a task is completed or can be used
- Only the modeler is expected to initially complete the task

Prompting: Using cues to assist someone else in completing a task
- Two active participants

START WITH MODELING

Research has found that modeling decreases student error, positively affects the perceived importance of a task and increases self-regulated learning.

LANGUAGE MODELING TO VERBAL CHILDREN

 LANGUAGE MODELING TO CHILDREN USING AAC

IF WE CHANGE OUR DEFINITION OF LANGUAGE MODELING

LEARN THE LANGUAGE SYSTEM

• It’s difficult to teach something you don’t know.
• Know how to find words on the AAC system.
  - Understand the architecture and organization
  - Explore the device
  - Use Word Finder
  - Take a class offered by the manufacturer
• Learn with your child
  - Think aloud while learning
  “I don’t know where the word clean is on your talker as in clean up. Let’s go on a hunt and find it. Let’s look under picture of the bathtub because we get clean in the bath. There it is, clean.”

MODELING

Contains two key features:

With AAC modeling, the teacher uses the AAC system in the context of a naturalistic communication interaction.

HOW CAN I MODEL?

With low-tech supports/back-ups
Video modeling
On the child’s device
On a second device
On device
MODELING IN EARLY LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

What does mom say when her child...
- says "mama" and hugs herself?
- says "mama" and points to something?
- says "mama" and raises arms up?

Moon, that's the moon.
I love you too!
Up, you want up?

THE STAIRWAY OF MODELING

The facilitator is always one step above the learner, reaching down with his/her hand to help the user up...
Model at the learner’s current “step”, and the “step” you’re on.

MODEL EARLY AND MODEL OFTEN

Meaningful linguistic gains across four areas including
(a) pragmatics, marked by increases in communication turns
(b) semantics, marked by receptive and expressive vocabulary increases
(c) syntax, marked by multi-symbol turn increases
(d) morphology, marked by increases in target morphology structures.


AIDED LANGUAGE STIMULATION

Aided language stimulation (ALS) is a communication strategy, where a communication partner teaches symbol meaning and models language by combining his or her own verbal input with selection of vocabulary on the Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) system. This is done by simultaneously selecting vocabulary on the AAC system and speaking.

AIDED LANGUAGE STIMULATION

PROCEDURE FOR AIDED LANGUAGE STIMULATION

Make sure the learner is watching
Create a message using the device, say the word while selecting
Use the structure you’re trying to teach in full and repeat verbally
Respond with a follow-up question
Gradually increase the number of icons/length of utterance as capabilities grow
AIDED LANGUAGE STIMULATION

EXAMPLE FOR “TURN DOWN”

Make sure individual is attending to AAC device.

Select “TURN” and “DOWN.”

Say, “TURN down.” - Say, “I want to turn it down.”

Say, “Would you like to turn it down?”

TIPS FOR AIDED LANGUAGE STIMULATION

- Provide short, but complete verbal models.
- No matter what the individual selects on the board or device, the rule for communication partners is: RESPOND, RESPOND, RESPOND. Provide natural consequences to whatever the person said, even if it seems like a mistake.
- After the person communicates something, expand upon it.
- Model the type of language you hope the child or adult will produce.
- Model “definitions” and “word altering” strategies as part of your ongoing communication process.

DIRECTLY ASSISTING A STUDENT WITH THE COMPLETION OF A TASK. A PROMPT PULLS THE STUDENT THROUGH EACH STEP TO THE END OF THE TASK AND PROVIDES A DIRECT ANSWER.

PROMPTING

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PROMPTING

WHAT LEVEL OF PROMPTING

Most-to-least for a new skill, device, or page set

Least-to-most for an emerging skill that is inconsistent

May be somewhere in the middle for certain skills/tasks

Ultimate Goal: Independence

Provide the lowest level of cueing or prompting for the student to be successful. Incrementally and plannfully reduce the level of support until the student is fully independent.

Expectant Pause

Give the child time to respond (at least 10 – 15 seconds) and the opportunity to initiate communication.
PAUSING ALLOWS PROCESSING TIME
- The language/message being presented by the adult
- The fact that they are expected to respond
- What the response will be
- How that response is represented on their communication system
- What muscles to move to indicate their response

NONVERBAL PROMPT
USE YOUR BODY LANGUAGE TO INDICATE TO THE CHILD THAT SOMETHING IS EXPECTED
- Shrug
- Raised eyebrow
- Expectant look

ENVIRONMENTAL CUES
Use objects in the environment as cues
- Show food or toy choices
- Tapping or pointing to objects

ASK OPEN ENDED QUESTIONS
What should we do?
What do you need me to do?

VISUAL PROMPTS
Gesture or point toward the low-tech board or device without pointing directly to the target word

GIVE TWO CHOICES
Do you want to read or play?
Do you want chocolate or vanilla?
**MODEL**

Model an appropriate response on a device or low-tech board

**PARTIAL PHYSICAL PROMPT**

Provide support to the elbow

**PHYSICAL PROMPT—HAND UNDER HAND**

It feels more respectful. No one likes to be forced to do anything.

It isn’t as pushy. It may feel quite intrusive to the learner to be physically made to do something.

It gives control to the learner. Usually when we use this, we are inviting the learner to participate.

It encourages active participation. This is great for motor learning and decreases passivity.

It can be reassuring for learners. Some of our learners are reluctant to touch certain things. Sometimes, this makes our learners more willing to participate.


**REASONS FOR PROMPT DEPENDENCE**

- Lack of motivation
- Overprompting by the communication partner
  - No variety in repetition
    - Becomes a script
  - Compliance over communication
  - Fear of “wrong” answer
- The Goal is Independent Communication – many individuals become prompt dependent because people over-prompt.

**REMEMBER**

- The Goal is Communication – if the individual communicates (via voice, sign, gesture, etc.) acknowledge the communication and model the target word, but don’t require the individual to “say it with his/her device.”
- It’s important to pause and give the individual time to process the language and respond.
- It’s important to fade the prompts as soon as possible.
Modeling (Aided Language Stimulation) is often the best way to promote independent communication. Model without expecting a response.

Communication should be FUN – make sure you are teaching with fun activities. Individuals should ‘want’ to engage, not be ‘required’ to participate.

Physical Prompting should not be used to force children to communicate with the device or board but rather for children who need assistance learning the motor plan for a new word.

Physical Prompting should be used with caution and quickly faded so individuals don’t become prompt dependent.

QUESTIONS?
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