

Addressing Obstacles for Implementing an AAC System



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Disclosures

Financial Disclosure: We are employees of and receive salaries from Talk To Me Technologies.

Non-Financial Disclosure: No non-financial disclosures.



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...with technology that helps improve communication

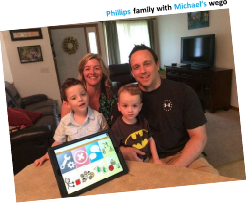
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Introduction

This session will provide an overview of common misconceptions that deter or delay the consideration and effective introduction of robust AAC. Evidence and insight to dispel these myths will be discussed to encourage reframed thinking to address the common concerns of team members and ensure a supportive environment. Information will detail an informal framework to address big concerns including how to feature-match hardware and software to the needs of your clients and reduce device abandonment. Attendees will leave with the knowledge and tools needed to dispel common myths, eliminate barriers, and effectively select an AAC system.



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01


Identify barriers to or misconceptions about AAC introduction and how to overcome or avoid them.

02


Describe considerations of the feature-matching process to identify the most appropriate AAC system.

03

List 2 best practice strategies in AAC implementation.

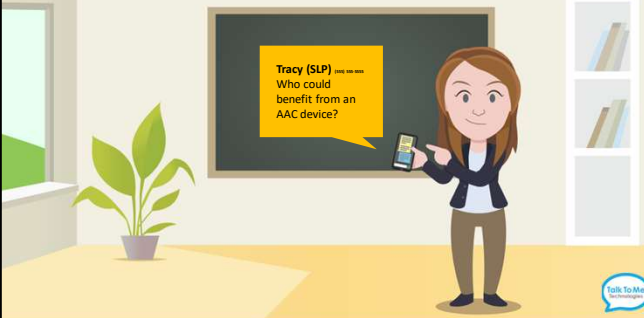


Learning Objectives




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Barriers/Misconceptions



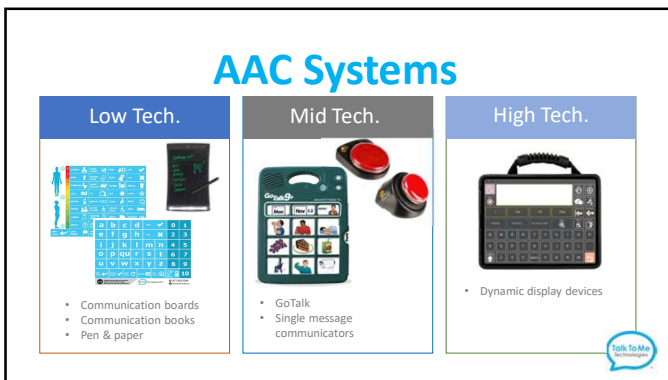
Tracy (SLP) speech language pathologist
Who could benefit from an AAC device?



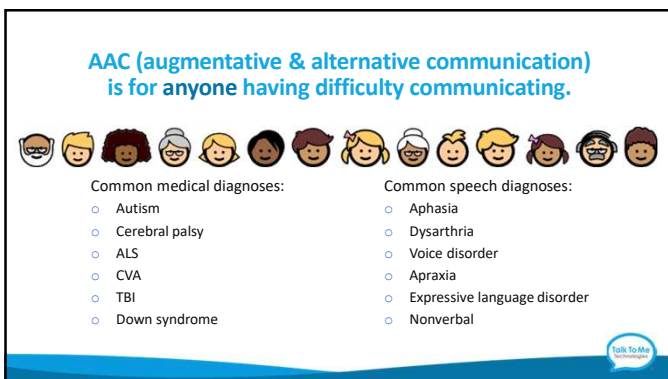
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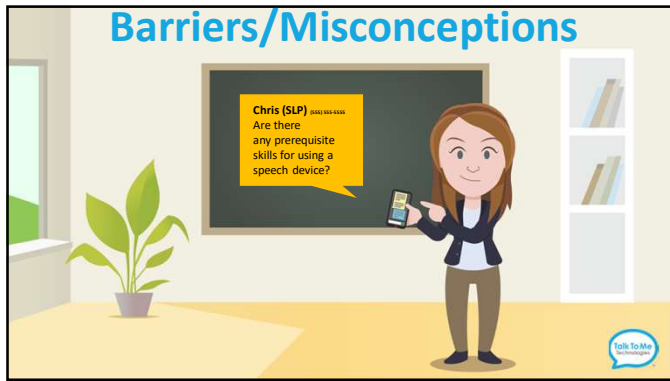
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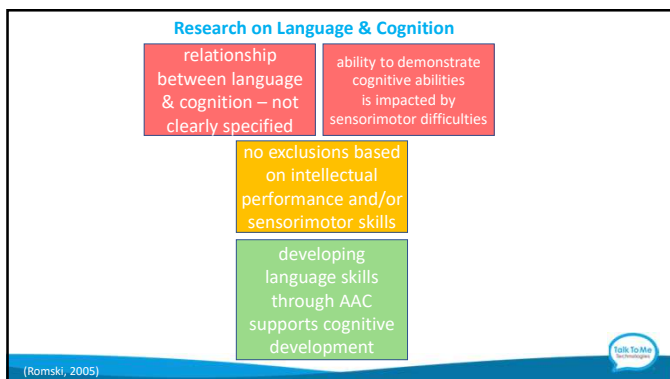
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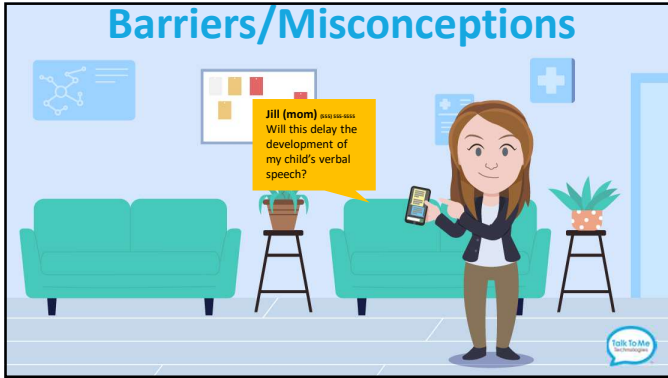
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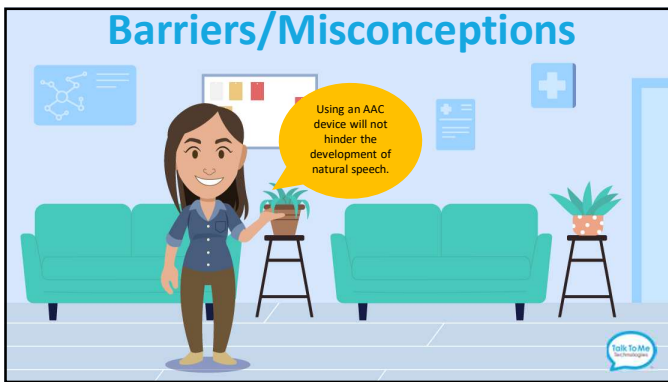
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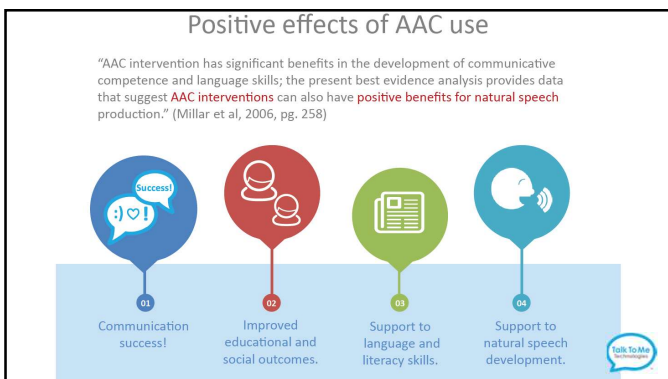
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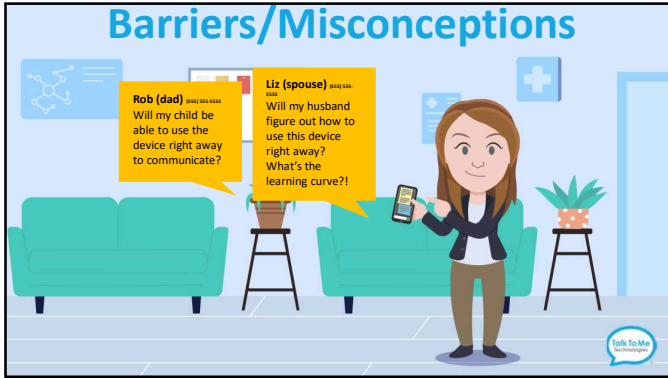
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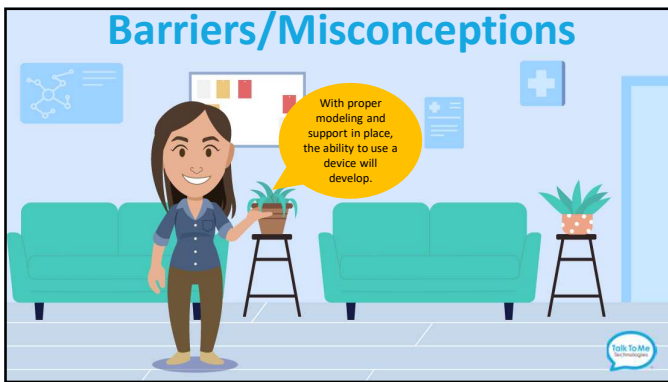
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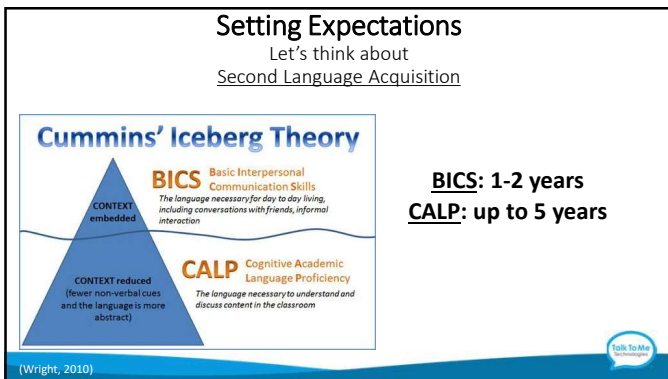
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Think About It...

“Learning to use AAC is nothing short of learning a separate—and, more specifically, second—language.”

“Giving a child who uses nonverbal communication an AAC system does provide the child with a tool to form their own voice—but it’s an incomplete response to a complex situation. The child needs a way to learn the language system, use the tool, and exert their voice. We must give AAC language systems the recognition, designation, and respect they deserve.”

Stephanie Coogan, MA, CCC-SLP (ASHA Wire, 2020)



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Barriers/Misconceptions


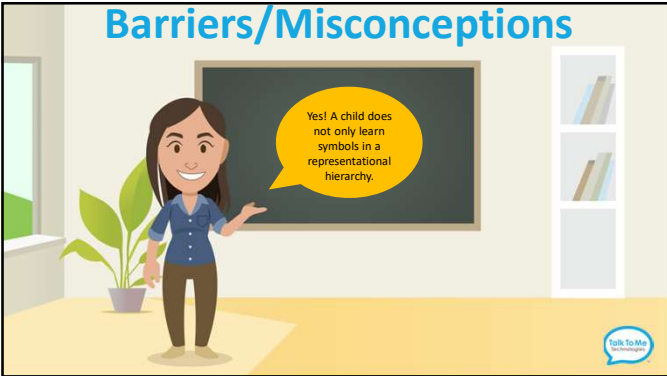
Wes (dad) 800-540-0834
Will my child be able to recognize symbols?



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Barriers/Misconceptions

Yes! A child does not only learn symbols in a representational hierarchy.



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Symbol Considerations

Iconicity = the amount that a visual symbol resembles its referent/intended message

- Iconicity is culture, time, & experience bound
- Understanding of relationship between symbol & referent will change over time and across development

Therefore...

- The symbol system maybe abstract or they might be iconic – this should not matter, as they all function the same and the meaning will be learned.

(Ronski, 2005)
(McClure & Rush, 2007)



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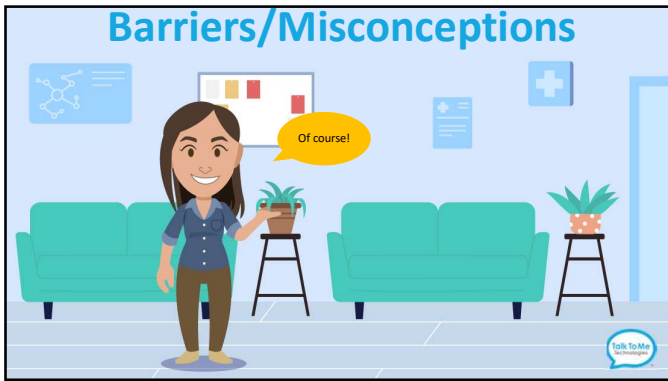
Barriers/Misconceptions

Jess (SLP) (2020-01-01)
I am a school SLP.
Am I able to recommend a device for my student?

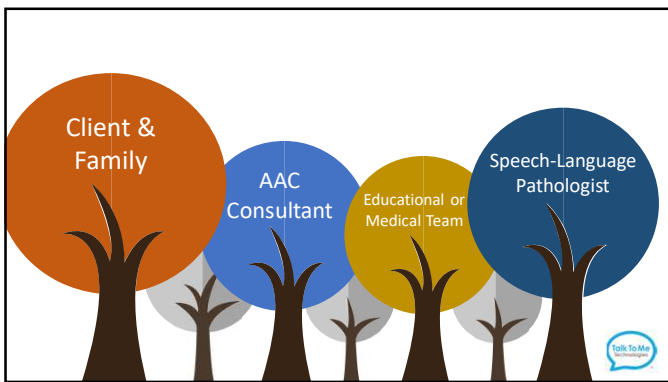
Joe (SLP) (2020-01-01)
I am an outpatient SLP.
My patient was just diagnosed with ALS, but I've never done an AAC eval before. Am I able to recommend a device?



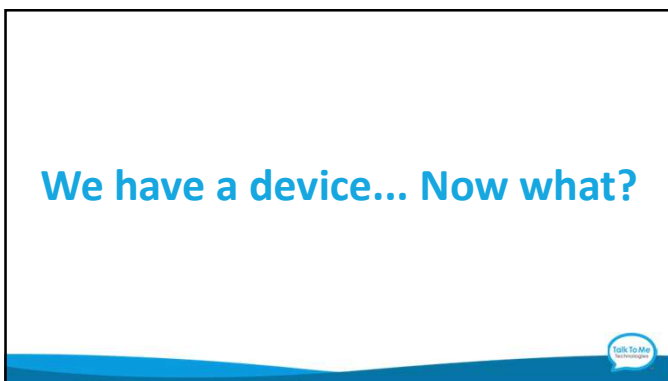
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Pitfall in Implementation

"I just had to send a quick note! I added toppings to pizza last night as you suggested. He chose sausage on his device- which when I asked him if he wanted sausage on his pizza- he said yes and giggled. He did not want pepperoni and indicated that with a NOT on device with some guidance!! He then ate up the entire pizza :) It may seem little but it was HIS VOICE and he was happy about it!!! 😊😊😊"


Best Practice



(AssistiveWare)


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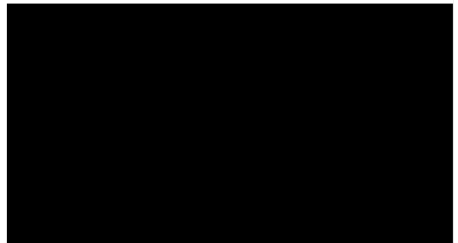
Universal Core Max



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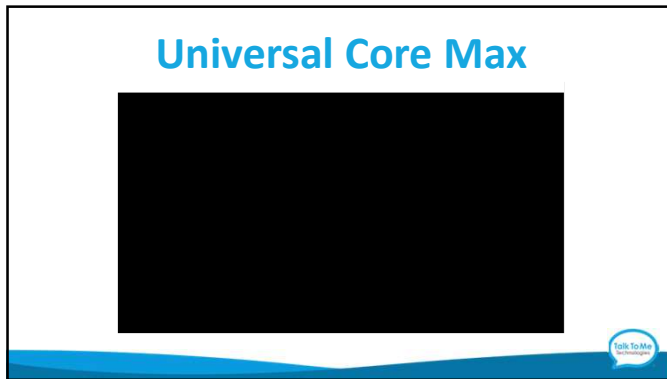
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Universal Core 25

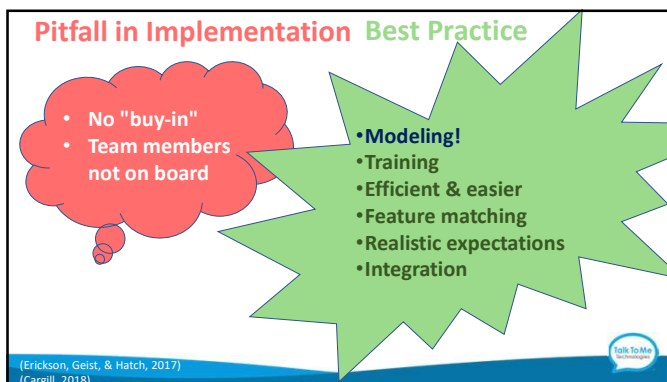


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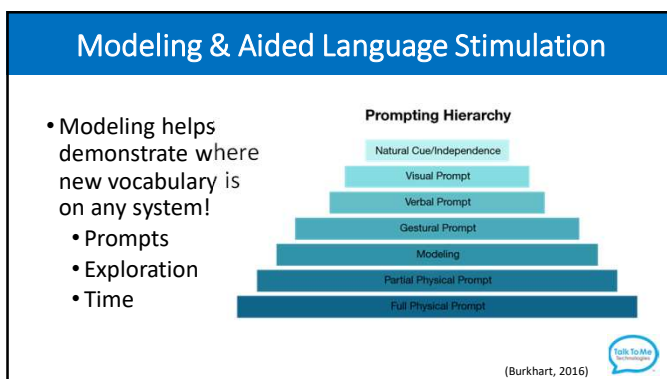
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Pitfall in Implementation

- No "buy-in"
- Team members not on board

Best Practice

- Modeling!
- Training
- Efficient & easier
- Feature matching
- Realistic expectations
- Integration

(Erickson, Geist, & Hatch, 2017)
(Careall, 2018)

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Team Training

Client & Family

AAC Consultant

Educational or Medical Team

Speech-Language Pathologist

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Pitfall in Implementation

- No "buy-in"
- Team members not on board


Best Practice

- Modeling!
- Training
- Efficient & easier
- Feature matching
- Realistic expectations
- Integration

(Erickson, Geist, & Hatch, 2017)
(Careall, 2018)

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Efficient & Easier



Does the SGD allow the client to communicate something that cannot already be communicated by some other means?

Is the new SGD more efficient and easier to use than other, existing means of communication?

(Erickson, Geist, & Hatch, 2017)




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Pitfall in Implementation Best Practice

- No "buy-in"
- Team members not on board

- Modeling!
- Training
- Efficient & easier
- **Feature matching**
- Realistic expectations
- Integration

(Erickson, Geist, & Hatch, 2017)
(Carroll, 2018)





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Feature-Matching Process

Matching

Asking

- An individual's strengths/skills, abilities, and needs are matched to available tools and strategies.
- Asking the question, "What factors need to be considered when selecting a communication system for this individual?"

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Pitfall in Implementation **Best Practice**

- No "buy-in"
- Team members not on board

- Modeling!
- Training
- Efficient & easier
- Feature matching
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- Integration

(Erickson, Geist, & Hatch, 2017)
(Carroll, 2018)

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Realistic Expectations

unrealistic expectations → device abandonment

supporting language development & use → realistic expectations (without limits!)

"She had been using a 4-button vocabulary set, but she knows SO much! We increased it to 60 buttons."

"He taps random buttons, but we know he's exploring and learning."

"He keeps hitting the same button over and over again. It's disruptive in class, so we removed it."

"I've been modeling every day for the 4 weeks of her trial period, but she still doesn't use it independently."

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Pitfall in Implementation **Best Practice**

- No "buy-in"
- Team members not on board

- Modeling!
- Training
- Efficient & easier
- Feature matching
- Realistic expectations
- Integration

(Erickson, Geist, & Hatch, 2017)
(Carroll, 2018)

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Integration

“Just a moment ago, she had brought her swimsuit to me. She loves playing in the sprinkler. Then, she independently grabbed her device and the sunscreen and programmed and played the words 'play outside' multiple times.”

distance
g!
routines

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FREE online downloads from TalkToMeTechnologies.com

Lesson Plans
Beginner, Intermediate and Advanced lessons for emergent communicators

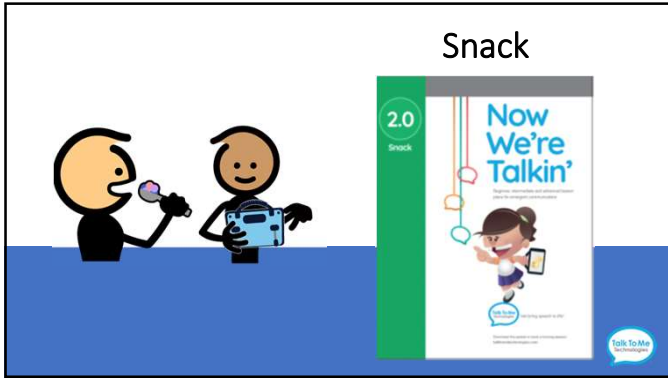
COOL

Now We're Talkin'

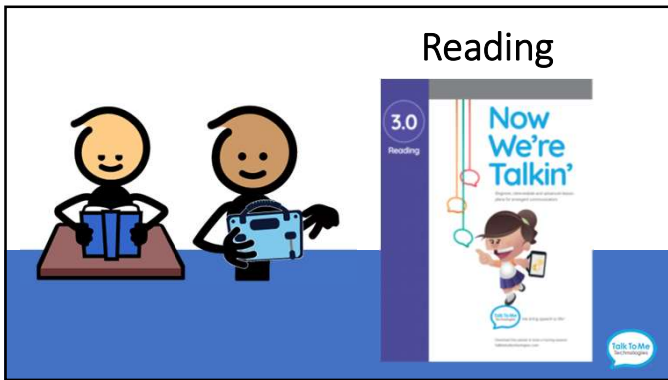
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Play

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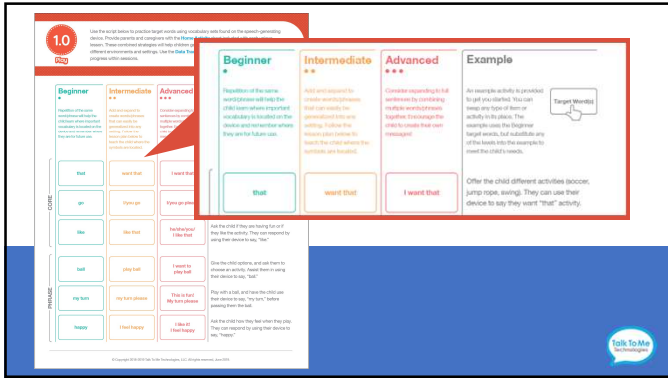
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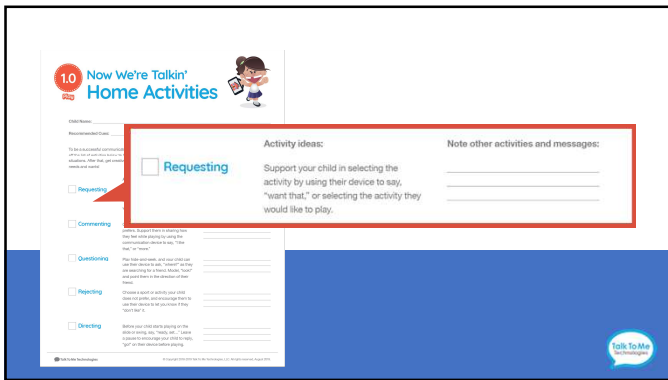
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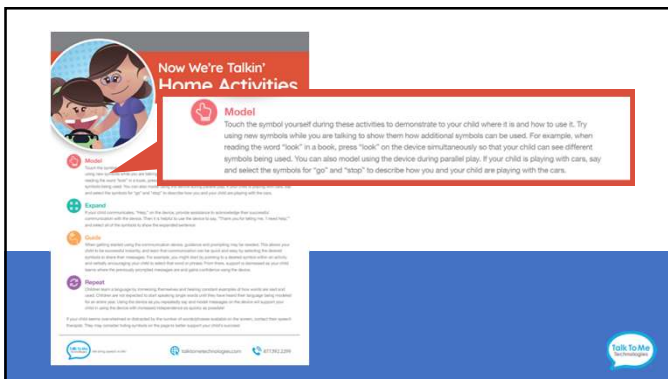
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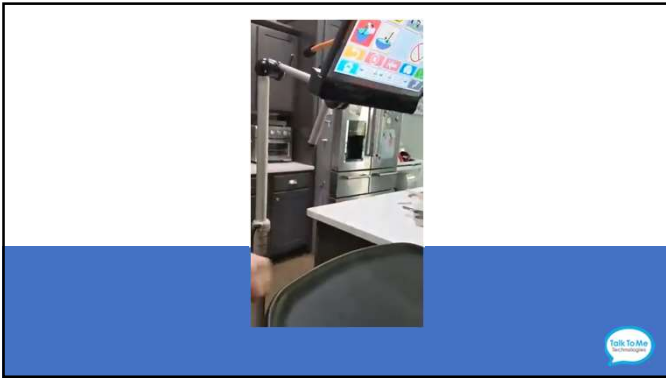
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Pitfall in Implementation

"On another note, I just wanted to say that she is already trying to communicate with her new device. Last night, I left it with her until she fell asleep just to see what she would say on her own without me there and when I looked at it this morning, she typed out the process that we took to go on vacation (doctor, airport place, house, pool). I was so excited, because it was exactly what we did. We took our Covid test, got on the plane and went straight to a vacation rental with a pool. I think she is ready to go back!"

Best Practice



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Personalization Options

Show off your personality and protect your speech device with one of our exclusive device skin designs!











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Best Practices

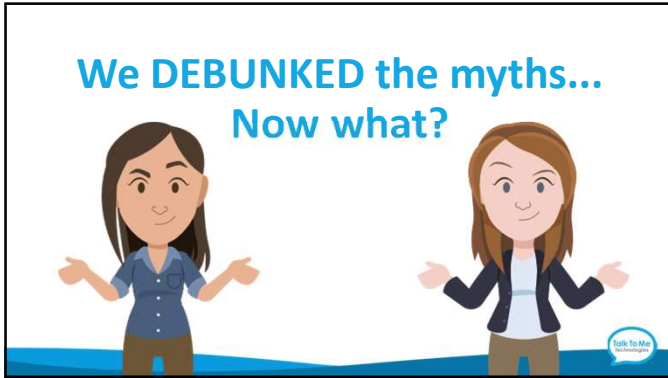
- Do collaborate with all team members
- Do presume competence
- Do set high expectations
- Do respond to intent and accept multimodal communication
- Do praise and immediately respond to communication attempts
- Do keep device programming current
- Do ask open ended questions
- Do use non-directive language
- Do allow time for the user to explore and "babble"
- Do create communication opportunities
- Do give wait time
- Do keep icon placement consistent (support motor planning)
- Do create an immersive environment: Model, Model, Model

- ▶ Don't expect the user to know how to use the device without being taught
- ▶ Don't underestimate the user's ability
- ▶ Don't ask the user questions to prove mastery of the device
- ▶ Don't move buttons around to test the user's knowledge
- ▶ Don't tell the user what to say
- ▶ Don't use the device to "test" the user

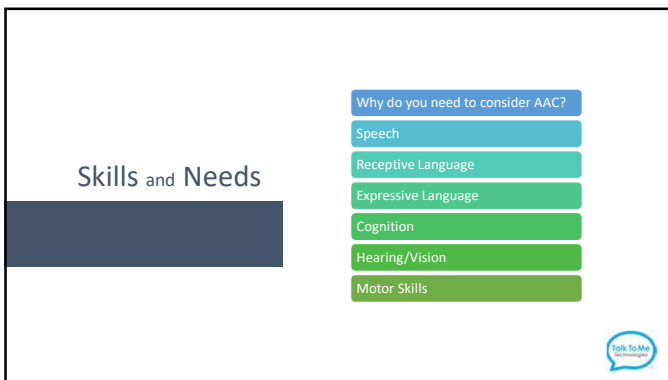



(Farrall & Niemeijer, 2005)
(LoStracco, 2017)
(Zangari, 2017)

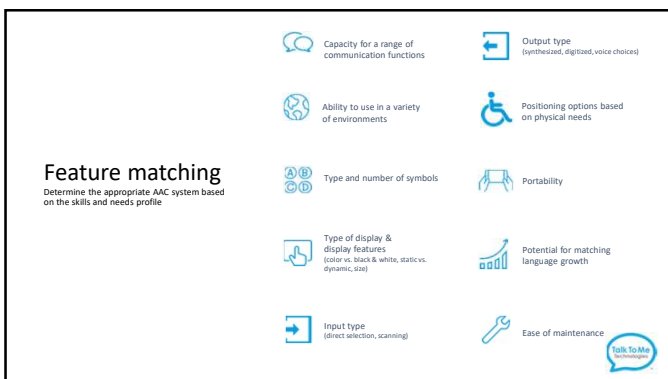
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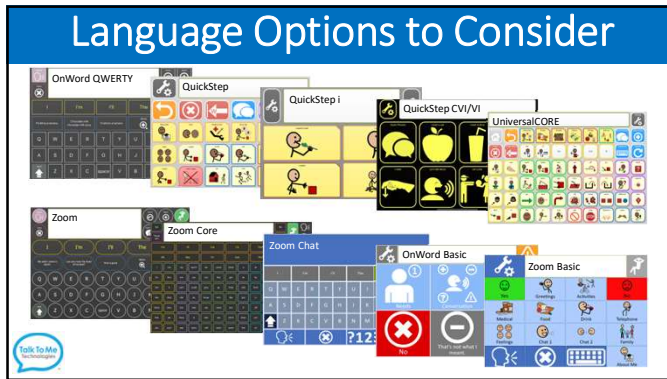
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Devices – wego A

Feature Matching

Accessories

- TTMT SPKR
- Stand
- Handle
- Keyguard
- Shoulder strap
- Mounting system

Screen Size/Weight

Access Options

- Direct access
- Switch scanning
- Head tracking

Language & Vocabulary Options

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Compare/Contrast wego Case Studies

wego 19-D

- 6-year-old female
- Diagnosis of autism
- Attends school full-time
- Good fine motor abilities; able to isolate finger for direct select access
- Ambulatory; will be responsible for transporting device
- Known to throw items when frustrated

wego 19A-D with integrated Head Tracking

- 32-year-old male
- Diagnosis of aphasia after a traumatic brain injury
- Previously employed full time; now living at home and increasing independence
- Impaired cognition and literacy skills
- Wears glasses
- Still has fine motor ability for direct selection, but does fatigue
- Good neck/head control

PHOTOS AND INFORMATION ARE FICTIONAL, USED TO DEMONSTRATE EXAMPLES OF POSSIBLE SCENARIOS

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Devices – zuvo

Feature Matching

Accessories

- TTMT SPKR
- Stand
- Handle
- Keyguard
- Shoulder strap
- Environmental Control Unit
- Mounting system

Language & Vocabulary Options

Access Options

- Direct access
- Switch scanning
- Head tracking
- Eye gaze

Screen Size/Weight

Compare/Contrast zuvo Case Studies



zuvo 12-D with speech control

- 67-year-old male
- Diagnosis: ALS
- Uses a power wheelchair
- No use of upper extremities
- Limited controlled head movements
- Vision is WNL
- Cognition and literacy skills intact
- Severely dysarthric (stage 4); has completed voice banking



zuvo 36-D with speech scanning

- 16-year-old female
- Diagnosis: Cerebral Palsy
- Uses a power wheelchair
- Vision is declining
- Cognition and literacy skills intact
- Controlled motor movement of one digit (thumb)

PHOTOS AND INFORMATION ARE NOT INTENDED TO BE USED FOR ANY TYPE OF TEST OR AS AN ACCURATE



Basic Steps for Obtaining a High-Tech SGD



1. You've identified that a client would benefit from an 'AAC evaluation'.
2. The team researches different AAC companies to see what devices they offer in order to start the feature-matching process for the client.
3. Contact the local AAC consultant(s) for the company/companies whose device(s) you are interested in trialing. Schedule a trial(s) to determine what is the best fit.
4. The trial may be for one evaluation session, or it may expand across multiple weeks – this will depend on the individual's needs, as well as any potential insurance provider requirements they may have. During the evaluation session or across the trial period/sessions, track the individual's progress with the device.
5. Upon completion of the evaluation, the SLP will submit a report to the AAC consultant. This will begin the funding process.



We Can Help!

Talk To Me Technologies' TTMT 360 process supports successful communication

TTMT 360

Consultation

Evaluation Support

Trials

Personalization

Training & Support

Warranty

Funding / Insurance Assistance

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FREE Downloads and Resources

Now We're Talkin' board

Talking Card

My Name is

Now We're Talkin' board

Play Scripts - Short

Now We're Talkin' book

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Cedar Falls Preschool


Finding Cooper's Voice

Talk To Me Technologies


Now We're Talkin' board

Play Scripts - Short


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
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