



# How to Use AAC



## MODEL, MODEL, MODEL

Modelling, by definition, means using (a system, etc.) as an example to follow or imitate. With verbal communicators, we model language by talking to them, (e.g., "that's a bird!"). AAC needs to be modelled in the same way. If your child is looking at, or interested in something, we can show the child how to find the word/icon they are searching for and press it for them (e.g., pressing "bird" icon). This should be done without expectation for the child to imitate or touch the device themselves (in the same way you wouldn't model language to your a new baby and expect them to speak back to you!)

## BUILDING INTEREST IN AAC

- Follow the child's interest! Use the device to talk about what your child is already playing with or looking at!
- Encourage your child to use their device by responding to their attempts (even if they are incorrect!) and give praise!
- Use AAC during fun routines or preferred activities for your child. Use the device to talk about fun, playful things rather than just immediate requests.

## CORE WORDS

"Core Words" refer to high frequency words that are used as the "building blocks" of our sentences and comprise the bulk of our day to day sentences (such as "more," "go," "done," "see") Research suggests that learning and using "Core Words" before nouns can help a child increase functionality of a smaller vocabulary.

## WHAT IF MY CHILD ISN'T USING THEIR DEVICE?

### Presume Competence

If a child is not yet using their device, they may not understand how to YET. This does not mean they have less language capacity. All children have their own ideas they want to communicate.

### Avoid Hand Over Hand

Hand over hand (moving a child's hand to touch an icon) teaches dependency, does not facilitate motor skills, and teaches kids prompt dependency and that others can violate their autonomy.

### Keep Modelling!

