

## EBP DATABASE

The EBP database is designed to help you in the EBP selection process. First, select the relevant age range and choose the domain you are targeting. Next, click “Apply”. The information will be presented in two ways.

On the right side of the screen you will see all of the included articles that target your selected age range and domain, along with the associated EBPs.

On the left side of the screen you will see the menu of EBPs that have proven effective in addressing the selected outcome for the targeted age range. You will also see the number of articles associated with each EBP in parentheses after the EBP. You can click the EBP to see the articles that contribute to the evidence base for each practice.

Age

- Any -



Domains

- Any -



APPLY

CLEAR

<https://ncaep.fpg.unc.edu/ebp-database>

## EBP DATABASE

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Age: 6-11.9 years Domains: Communication **APPLY** **CLEAR**

- EBP**
- Antecedent-based interventions (3)
  - Augmentative and alternative communication (24)
  - Cognitive behavioral instructional strategies (5)
  - Differential reinforcement (9)
  - Direct Instruction (2)
  - Discrete trial training (11)



Displaying 1 - 40 of 181

**A Social Stories™ intervention package for students with autism in inclusive classroom settings**

**Age(s):** 36-71.9 months (3-5.9 years), 6-11.9 years

**Domain(s):** Challenging/interfering behavior, Communication, Social

**EBP(s):** Social narratives, Social Stories™

**A comparison of existing and novel communication responses used during functional communication training**

**Age(s):** 6-11.9 years, 12-14.9 years

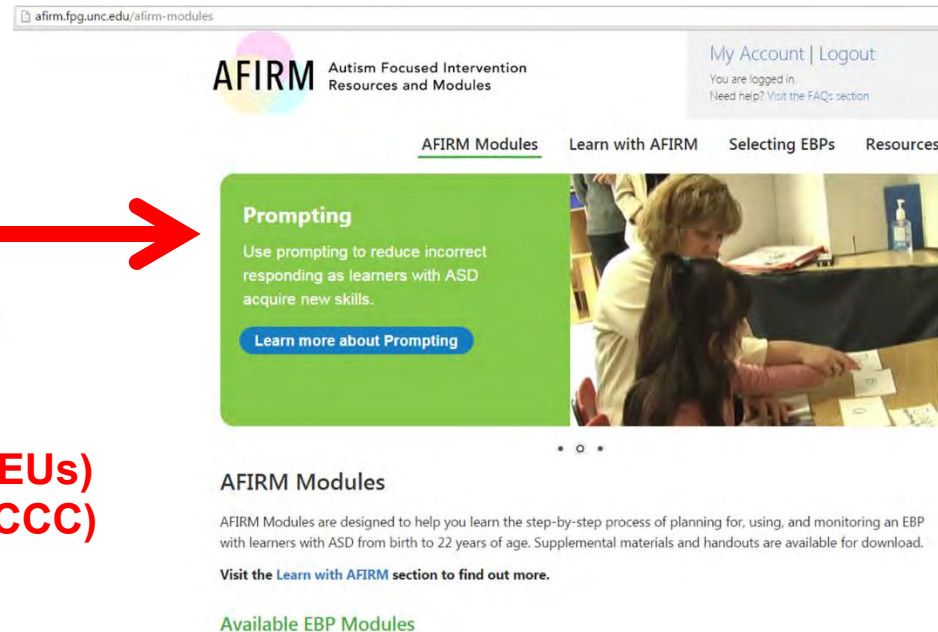
**Domain(s):** Challenging/interfering behavior, Communication

**EBP(s):** Functional communication training

**A comparison of the effects of organismic and setting variables on the social interaction behavior of children with developmental disabilities and autism**

# FREE High Quality Training: Autism Focused Intervention Resources and Modules (AFIRM)

Designed to help you learn the step-by-step process of planning for, using, and monitoring EBPs with learners with ASD from birth to 22 years of age



There's a  
Learning  
Module for  
most of the  
28 EBPs

Includes Parent  
Resources!

BCBA (Approved BACB Type 2 CEUs)  
SLP (ASHA for maintaining your CCC)



Autism Focused Intervention  
Resources and Modules

[www.captain.ca.gov](http://www.captain.ca.gov)

<http://afirm.fpg.unc.edu/afirm-modules>





## Autism Focused Intervention Resources & Modules



**AAC** **Augmentative & Alternative Communication**  
• Hide description  
Augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) can be used to increase student communication, socialization, and engagement while reducing interfering behaviors.  
**Time to complete:**  
This module will take approximately 1.5 - 2 hours to complete.  
[Select Module](#)

**ASI** **Ayres Sensory Integration**  
• Hide description  
Ayres Sensory Integration® (ASI) can be used to increase learner communication, socialization, cognitive, and adaptive skills while reducing challenging behaviors in learners with identified challenges in sensory processing.  
**Time to complete:**  
This module will take approximately 1.5 - 2 hours to complete.  
[Select Module](#)

**BMI** **Behavioral Momentum Intervention**  
• Hide description  
Behavioral Momentum Intervention can be used to build skills and increase compliance by changing the sequence in which skills are taught.  
**Time to complete:**  
This module will take approximately 1.5 - 2 hours to complete.  
[Select Module](#)

**MMI** **Music-Mediated Intervention**  
• Hide description  
Music-mediated intervention (MMI) can be used to increase learner communication, socialization, play, motor, and adaptive skills while reducing interfering behaviors.  
**Time to complete:**  
This module will take approximately 1.5 - 2 hours to complete.  
[Select Module](#)

**The SELPA Content Lead-ASD funded the development of these four newest EBPs**

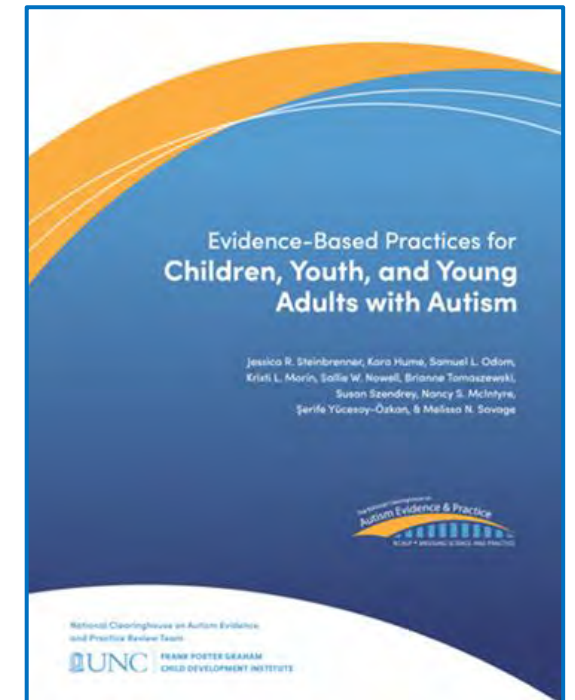
**We thank the AFIRM researchers and developers for their amazing work!**

# THE NEED FOR IMPLEMENTATION SCIENCE

## PAGE 50

“Some practitioners will be able to take the translated information about EBPs and directly apply it in their classrooms, but **Implementation Science** informs us that additional steps are needed for most practitioners.

**Professional development, such as coaching, and organizational support** are all factors that may be necessary for closing the last link of the research to practice gap.”



# INTERVENTION FACT SHEETS AVAILABLE FOR EACH OF THE 28 EBPs

- Definition of the Intervention
- Age Range
- Outcome Areas
- References (specific articles that provide the evidence for the efficacy of the practice)

Name of EBP		Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC)					
Definition of EBP		<p>Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) interventions use and/or teach the use of a system of communication that is not verbal/vocal including aided and unaided communication systems. Unaided communication systems do not use any materials or technology (e.g., sign language and gestures). Aided communication systems include low tech systems (e.g., exchanging objects/pictures or pointing to letters) and extend to high tech speech generating devices (SGDs) and applications that allow other devices (i.e., phones, tablets) to serve as SGDs. Methods of teaching AAC use are also included in this category (e.g., Aided Language Modeling) which may include other EBPs such as prompting, reinforcement, visual supports, and peer-mediated interventions.</p> <p>• Manualized Interventions Meeting Criteria: Picture Exchange Communication System® (PECS®; Bondy and Frost, 1985).</p>					
Outcome Areas		Age Ranges					
		0-2 Toddlers	3-5 Preschoolers	6-11 Elementary School	12-14 Middle School	15-18 High School	19-22 Young Adults
Communication	Communication	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Social	✓	✓	✓		✓	
	Joint attention	✓	✓	✓			
	Play	✓	✓	✓			
Cognitive	Cognitive						
	School readiness						
	Academic/Pre-academic		✓	✓			
Adaptive/self-help	Adaptive/self-help						
	Challenging/Interfering behavior		✓	✓			
	Vocational						
	Motor					✓	
Mental health	Mental health						
	Self-determination						
References		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Agius, M. M., &amp; Vance, M. (2016). A comparison of PECS and iPad to teach requesting to pre-schoolers with autistic spectrum disorders. <i>Augmentative and Alternative Communication</i>, 32(1), 58-68. <a href="https://doi.org/10.3109/07434618.2015.1108363">https://doi.org/10.3109/07434618.2015.1108363</a></li> <li>2. Ali, E., MacFarland, S. Z., &amp; Umbreit, J. (2011). Effectiveness of combining tangible symbols with the Picture Exchange Communication System to teach requesting skills to children with multiple disabilities including visual impairment. <i>Education and Training in Autism and Developmental Disabilities</i>, 46(3), 425-435.</li> <li>3. Almirall, D., DiStefano, C., Chang, Y.-C., Shire, S., Kaiser, A., Lu, X., Nahu-m-Shani, I., Landa, R., Mathy, P., &amp; Kasari, C. (2016). Longitudinal effects of adaptive interventions with a speech-generating device in minimally verbal children with ASD. <i>Journal of Clinical Child &amp; Adolescent Psychology</i>, 45(4), 442-456. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1080/15374416.2016.1138407">https://doi.org/10.1080/15374416.2016.1138407</a></li> <li>4. Alzrayer, N. M., Banda, D. R., &amp; Koul, R. (2017). Teaching children with autism spectrum disorder and other developmental disabilities to perform multistep requesting using an iPad. <i>Augmentative and Alternative Communication</i>, 33(2), 65-76. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1080/07434618.2017.1306881">https://doi.org/10.1080/07434618.2017.1306881</a></li> </ol>					



## AFIRM Resources

Select a key word to search for AFIRM resources or filter AFIRM resources by category.

Keyword Search

Apply

# IMPLEMENTATION RESOURCES

### Browse by Module

- Antecedent-based Intervention
- Cognitive Behavior Intervention
- Differential Reinforcement
- Discrete Trial Training
- Exercise
- Extinction
- Functional Behavior Assessment
- Functional Communication Training
- Modeling
- Naturalistic Intervention
- Parent Implemented Interventions
- Peer-Mediated Instruction and Intervention
- Picture Exchange Communication System
- Pivotal Response Training
- Prompting
- Response interruption and Redirection
- Reinforcement
- Scripting
- Self-management
- Social Narratives
- Social Skills Training
- Structured Play Groups
- Task Analysis
- Technology-aided Instruction and Intervention
- Time Delay
- Video Modeling
- Visual Supports

### Browse by Module Lesson

- Lesson 1 - Basics
- Lesson 2 - Planning for the Practice
- Lesson 3 - Using the Practice
- Lesson 4 - Monitoring Progress
- Additional Materials

### Browse by Document Type

- Evidence-base
- Implementation checklist
- Parent's guide
- Professional standards
- Step-by-Step practice guide
- Tip sheet for professionals
- EBP Brief Packet

Implementation  
Checklists

Parent Guides

### AFIRM Videos

- Browse Videos

EBP Videos



# AFIRM VIDEOS of Evidence-Based Practices

<https://afirm.fpg.unc.edu/afirm-videos>

The screenshot shows the AFIRM website interface. At the top left is the AFIRM logo and the text "Autism Focused Intervention Resources & Modules". To the right, there is a "My Account | Logout" link with subtext "You are logged in. Need help? Visit the FAQs section". Below this is a navigation menu with links for "AFIRM Modules", "COVID-19 Toolkit", "Earn CE Credits", "Selecting EBPs", and "Resources". The main heading is "AFIRM Videos" in green, followed by the instruction "Select a key word to search for AFIRM videos or filter AFIRM videos by category." Below this is a "Keyword Search" input field and an "Apply" button. Two sidebars are visible: "Browse by Module" on the left and "Browse by Module Lesson" on the right. The "Browse by Module" sidebar lists 28 evidence-based practices, and the "Browse by Module Lesson" sidebar lists four lessons and additional materials.

**AFIRM** Autism Focused Intervention Resources & Modules

My Account | Logout  
You are logged in.  
Need help? Visit the FAQs section.

AFIRM Modules COVID-19 Toolkit Earn CE Credits Selecting EBPs Resources

## AFIRM Videos

Select a key word to search for AFIRM videos or filter AFIRM videos by category.

Keyword Search  **Apply**

**Browse by Module**

- Antecedent-based Intervention
- Cognitive Behavior Intervention
- Differential Reinforcement
- Discrete Trial Training
- Exercise
- Extinction
- Functional Behavior Assessment
- Functional Communication Training
- Modeling
- Naturalistic Intervention
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- Structured Play Groups
- Task Analysis
- Technology-aided Instruction and Intervention
- Time Delay
- Video Modeling
- Visual Supports

**Browse by Module Lesson**

- Lesson 1 - Basics
- Lesson 2 - Planning for the Practice
- Lesson 3 - Using the Practice
- Lesson 4 - Monitoring Progress
- Additional Materials

**Videos  
for most  
of the 28  
EBPs**



# Implementation Checklist Ensures Fidelity

- Used to assist with planning for EBP use
- Helps implementers self reflect on fidelity of use
- Helps coaches give objective feedback
- Helps to prevent drift

## ---Implementation Checklist---

AAC

		Observation:	1	2	3	4	5
		Date:					
		Observer's Initials:					
<b>STEP 1: PLANNING</b>							
<p>Before you start, have you...?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Identified the target goal/behavior/skill...?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Collected baseline data through direct observation...?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Established a target goal or outcome that clearly states when the behavior will occur, what the target goal or outcome is, and how team members and/or observers will know when the skill is mastered...?</p> <p>If the answer to any of the above questions is 'No,' review the process of how to <u>select an EBP</u>.</p>	1.1	Determine if an AAC assessment may be appropriate for a learner					
	1.2	Conduct an AAC assessment					
	1.3	Discuss technology and AAC preferences with family and learner					
	1.4	Identify available AAC resources					
	1.5	Select additional EBPs for teaching use of the AAC system					
	1.6	Plan opportunities for the learner to use AAC					
	1.7	Identify and train team members					
	1.8	Prepare and have materials ready and available					
	<b>STEP 2: USING</b>						
	2.1	Teach learner to use AAC device					
	2.2	Understand formalized AAC teaching approaches					
	2.3	Give reinforcement					
	2.4	Ensure consistent use of AAC across settings					
<b>STEP 3: MONITORING</b>							
	3.1	Collect and analyze data					
	3.2	Monitor use of AAC across settings					
	3.3	Troubleshoot issues (if needed)					
	3.4	Determine next steps based on learner progress					

# ONLINE LEARNING MODULES JUST FOR PARAEDUCATORS, TOO!



## Autism Focused Intervention Resources & Modules



<https://afirm.fpg.unc.edu/afirm-modules>

### AFIRM for Paraprofessionals: Simulated E-Learning

- Reinforcement: Introduction & Practice**  
• Hide description  
Reinforcement is used to increase the chances a learner with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) will use a target skill or behavior.  
**Time to complete:**  
This module will take approximately 1.5 - 2 hours to complete. [Select Module](#)
- Prompting: Introduction & Practice**  
• Hide description  
Prompting is used to help the learner with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) successfully use a target skill or behavior.  
**Time to complete:**  
This module will take approximately 1.5 - 2 hours to complete. [Select Module](#)
- Supporting Peer Interactions: Introduction & Practice**  
• Hide description  
Supporting peer interactions is a critical component of the learner's ability to engage socially with peers.  
**Time to complete:**  
This module will take approximately 1.5 - 2 hours to complete. [Select Module](#)
- Time Delay: Introduction & Practice**  
• Hide description  
Time delay is used to systematically fade the use of prompting for a target skill or behavior.  
**Time to complete:**  
This module will take approximately 1.5 - 2 hours to complete. [Select Module](#)
- Visual Cues: Introduction & Practice**  
• Hide description  
Visual cues are concrete objects used to increase the learner with ASD's ability to complete a target skill or behavior.  
**Time to complete:**  
This module will take approximately 1.5 - 2 hours to complete. [Select Module](#)

take a look!

# AFIRM Evidence-Based Practice AAC Brief Packet



## EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE BRIEF PACKET: AUGMENTATIVE & ALTERNATIVE COMMUNICATION

UNC Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute  
Autism Focused Intervention Resources & Modules  
Nowell, S., Sam, A., Waters, V., Dees, R., & AFIRM Team, 2022





# Overview

1. **Basics of AAC** (Lesson 1): Describes AAC and how it can be used with learners with autism, as well as who can use the AAC and its evidence-base from the 2020 NCAEP EBP Report (Steinbrenner et al., 2020).
2. **Planning for AAC** (Lesson 2): Provides concrete steps and examples of how to plan for using AAC.
3. **Using AAC** (Lesson 3): Provides concrete steps and scenarios of how practitioners and family members can use principles of AAC.
4. **Monitoring AAC** (Lesson 4): Provides steps for monitoring the use of AAC, such as collecting data and determining next steps for the learner with autism.
5. **Resources and Tools**: Free downloadable resources and tools to support use of AAC.

# ---Augmentative & Alternative Communication---

AAC

## WHAT IS AUGMENTATIVE & ALTERNATIVE COMMUNICATION?

Augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) are interventions that use a system of communication that is not verbal/vocal including aided and unaided communication systems. Methods of teaching AAC use are also included in this practice (e.g., Aided Language Modeling) and may include other EBPs such as prompting, reinforcement, visual supports, and peer-mediated interventions.

## EVIDENCE-BASE:

Based upon the 2020 systematic review conducted by the National Clearinghouse on Autism Evidence and Practice (NCAEP), this practice is a focused intervention that meets the evidence-based practice criteria with 47 single case design studies. This practice has been effective for early intervention (0-2 years), preschoolers (3-5 years), elementary school learners (6-11 years), middle school learners (12-14 years), and high schoolers (15-18 years) with autism. Studies included in the 2020 EBP report (Steinbrenner et al., 2020) detail how this practice can be used to effectively address the following outcomes for a target goal/behavior/skill: academic/pre-academic, challenging/interfering behavior, communication, joint attention, motor, play, and social.

## HOW IS AAC BEING USED?

This practice can be used by a variety of professionals, including teachers, special educators, therapists, paraprofessionals, and early interventionists in educational and community-based environments. Parents and family members also can use this practice in the home.

### Suggested Citation:

Nowell, S., Sam, A., Waters, V., Dees, R., & AFIRM Team (2022). *Augmentative & Alternative Communication*. The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute, Autism Focused Intervention Resources and Modules. <https://afirm.fpg.unc.edu/augmentative-alternative-communication>





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## ---Evidence-base---



The National Clearinghouse on Autism Evidence and Practice has adopted the following criteria to determine if a practice is evidence-based. The 2020 EBP report (Steinbrenner et al., 2020) provides more information about the systematic review process.

Efficacy must be established through high-quality, peer-reviewed research in scientific journals using:

- At least 2 randomized or quasi-experimental group design studies, or
- At least 5 single subject/case design studies, or a
- Combination of evidence of 1 randomized or quasi-experimental group design study **and** 3 single subject/case design studies

### OVERVIEW:

Based upon the 2020 systematic review conducted by the National Clearinghouse on Autism Evidence and Practice (NCAEP), this practice is a focused intervention that meets the evidence-based practice criteria with 47 single case design studies. This practice has been effective for early intervention (0-2 years), preschoolers (3-5 years), elementary school learners (6-11 years), middle school learners (12-14 years), and high schoolers (15-18 years) with autism. Studies included in the 2020 EBP report (Steinbrenner et al., 2020) detail how this practice can be used to effectively address the following outcomes for a target goal/behavior/skill: academic/pre-academic, challenging/interfering behavior, communication, joint attention, motor, play, and social.

In the table below, the instructional outcomes identified by the evidence base are shown by age of participants.

EVIDENCE-BASE:							
	ACADEMIC	CHALLENGING	COMMUNICATION	JOINT ATTENTION	MOTOR	PLAY	SOCIAL
0-2			Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes
3-5	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes
6-11	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes
12-14			Yes				
15-18			Yes		Yes		Yes

## ---Types of AAC---

AAC



Learn more about the types of AAC to support your understanding of this evidence-based practice.  
For more information, please visit <https://afirm.fpg.unc.edu/>.

### UNAIDED COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS:

Does not use any materials or technology, only a motion of your body (e.g., sign language and gestures)

- **Conventional gestures:** Communicative gestures used and understood by most members of a social group. In the United States, these include actions such as shoulder shrugging, head nodding/shaking, pointing, thumbs up/down, and high fives.
- **American Sign Language (ASL):** A complete natural language comprised of facial expressions and hand/finger movements with the same linguistic characteristics of spoken language, often used by the deaf/hard of hearing community.
- **Informal sign use** (for example, "Baby signing"): A set of simple hand gestures and movements designed to enhance communication for children who do not use much or any spoken language. May contain single word signs from ASL but not grammatical aspects of that language. May also include gestures that are unique and only understood by the child and their common communication partners.

### LOW-TECH AIDED COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS:

Aided systems that use some type of material or device. They include *low-tech systems* (e.g., exchanging objects/ pictures or pointing to letters) and extend to *mid-tech and high-tech speech generating devices* (SGDs) and applications that allow other devices (i.e., phones, tablets) to serve as SGDs.

- **Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS):** a formal evidence-based system of augmentative communication using picture exchange of standard images that represent words.
- **Communication books & boards:** Object choice board, choice board using photographs of objects/events, communication book using photographs, simple communication board using photographs, or complex communication book using symbols and letters.

### SPEECH GENERATING AIDED COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS:

Aided systems that use some type of material or device. They include *low-tech systems* (e.g., exchanging objects/ pictures or pointing to letters) and extend to *mid-tech and high-tech speech generating devices* (SGDs) and applications that allow other devices (i.e., phones, tablets) to serve as SGDs.

- **Communication buttons/switches, Speech generating keyboard, Speech generating communication boards, Speech generating device, Speech generating application on a tablet**

# ---Assessment Checklist Worksheet---



Learner's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date/Time: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Observer(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
 Target Goal/Behavior/Skill (short): \_\_\_\_\_  
 Directions: Complete this worksheet to determine if an assessment for AAC is needed

AAC SPECIFIC PLANNING:		
1. Is the learner making little progress toward communication goals during academic or social parts of the school day?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
2. Is the learner showing frustration or other negative behaviors when there are communication demands placed on them during the school day?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
3. Do the learner's teachers, family, and/or peers have a hard time understanding the learner's current communication or spoken language?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
4. Does the learner seem interested in participating in activities or communicating with others but lack the language to do so effectively?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
5. Does the learner show little engagement in daily activities or seem withdrawn?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
6. Has the learner's family mentioned communication concerns or the desire for the student to have more effective communication?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
7. Does the learner seem to have matured beyond their current AAC system?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

**If you answered yes to any of these questions, then the learner may need a more thorough assessment with your school speech-language pathologist or assistive technology specialist.**

**ANECDOTAL NOTES:**



## ---Data Collection: Observations---



Learner's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date/Time: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Observer(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
 Target Goal/Behavior/Skill: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Directions: Collect data observations on the learner's communication behaviors.

IDENTIFY COMMUNICATION BEHAVIORS:			
Time	Activity	Communication Partner	Communication Behavior Observed
		<input type="checkbox"/> Teacher <input type="checkbox"/> Para <input type="checkbox"/> Peer <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Teacher <input type="checkbox"/> Para <input type="checkbox"/> Peer <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Teacher <input type="checkbox"/> Para <input type="checkbox"/> Peer <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Teacher <input type="checkbox"/> Para <input type="checkbox"/> Peer <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Teacher <input type="checkbox"/> Para <input type="checkbox"/> Peer <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	

## ---Visual Support: Feelings---

AAC



Learner's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date/Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Observer(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Target Goal/Behavior/Skill: \_\_\_\_\_

Directions: Use these visual supports to help the learner indicate their feelings or preferences for various communication systems or devices.



Strongly Disagree



Disagree



Neutral



Agree



Strongly Agree



Strongly Dislike



Dislike



Undecided



Like



Love

## ---Family Considerations---

AAC



Learner's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date/Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Observer(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Target Goal/Behavior/Skill: \_\_\_\_\_

Directions: Use this sheet to guide discussion about AAC during a family meeting.

### AAC CONSIDERATIONS FROM FAMILY:

1. What are your hopes for the AAC device and your child's communication? Can we set some goals together and work on them both at home and at school?

2. Who is with the child most while they are at home? What types of activities does the child participate in outside of school? Who would be the best person to be trained to program the device for home use? Who interacts with the child and will need basic training on what to expect?

3. What kinds of technology do you use in your home? Who uses these devices? Who does not use them? Are there people who are more/less comfortable with technology and how can we make sure all of them can communicate with the child?

4. Do you have rules about screen time and technology use at home? Can we talk about parental controls on the device and other ways to ensure your child is not misusing the device and still following your house rules? Can we troubleshoot ways to tell the other children in your home that the AAC device is different than screen time?

5. Can you think of a good place in your home to store and charge the device when it is not being used? Is this place safe from pets and other potential hazards?

6. What are your biggest concerns about the AAC device? Can we troubleshoot those concerns together and come up with a plan?