DIVERSITY IN AAC APPS

WITH DIVERSE AAC

SLPS OF DIVERSE AAC

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TALKING POINTS TODAY

THE IMPORTANCE OF DIVERSE REPRESENTATION IN AAC SYSTEMS

PERSONALIZING PHYSICAL FEATURES

PERSONALIZING VOICE, LANGUAGE, & DIALECT

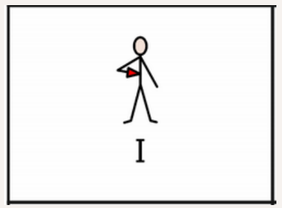
PERSONALIZING VOCABULARY

WORKAROUNDS & ACCESS TO TRAINING

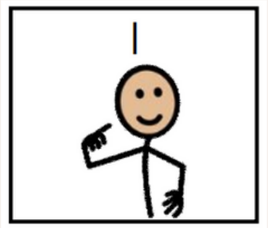
HOPE FOR FUTURE ADVANCEMENTS IN AAC

LET'S ALIGN TO MEET THE NEEDS OF ALL AAC USERS

LAMP WFL



Widgit

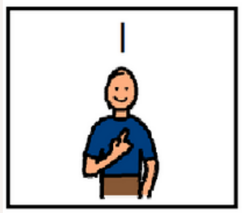


Proloquo2Go
TouchChat
Sonoflex

Snap Core First
Avaz

CoughDrop

Speak for Yourself



Boardmaker

LessonPix

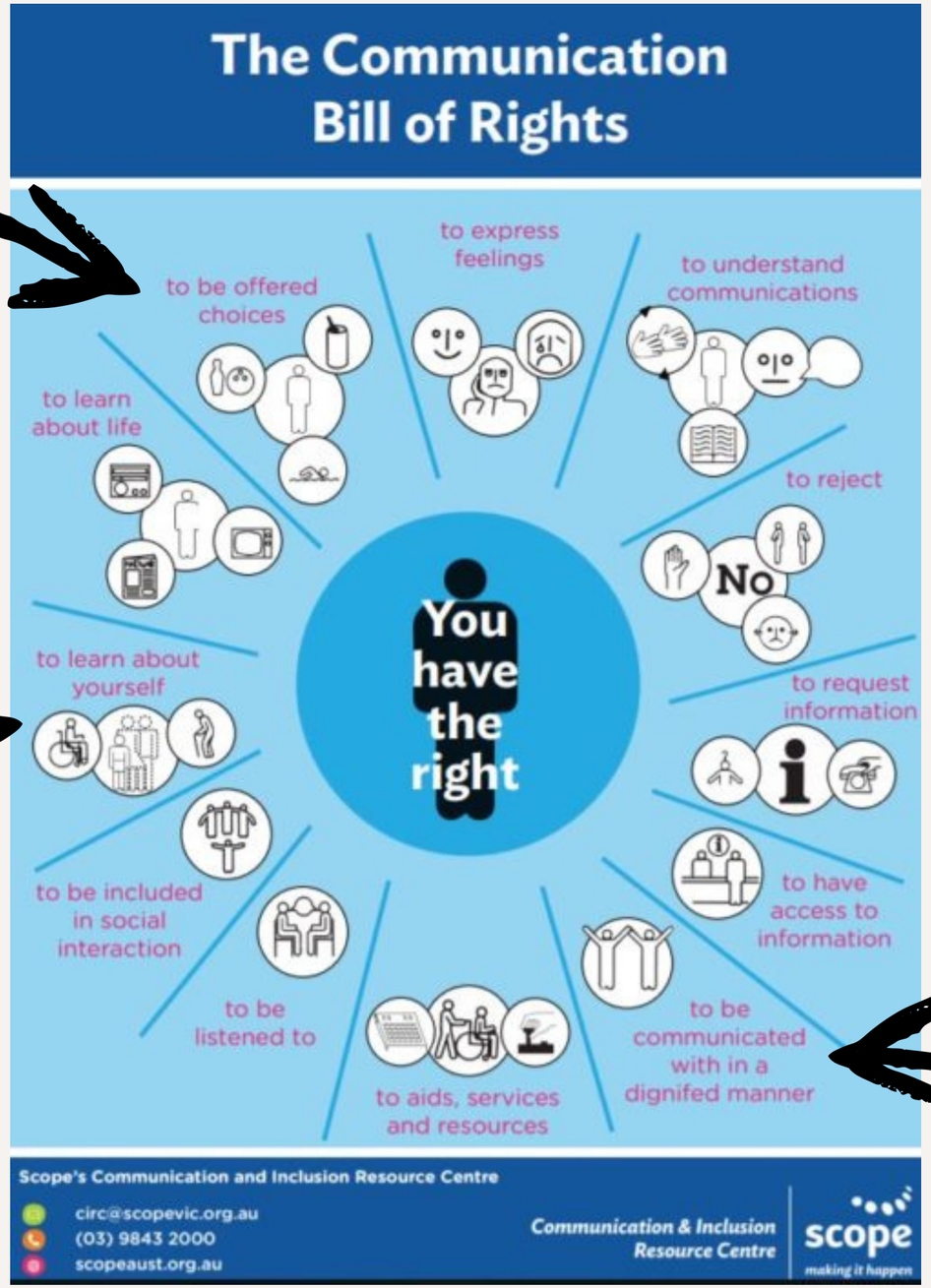
Currently, culturally diverse AAC users have difficulty creating a personal likeness (voice, appearance, dialect). Presently, professionals have to take extra steps to personalize a device to fit the individual's needs, requiring extensive AAC programming knowledge and time.

ITS A MATTER OF RESPECT

As professionals who respect the right and power of communication, we also encourage our AAC users to accept their device as part of their personal identity. The National Joint Committee for the Communication Needs of Persons With Severe Disabilities (NJC) states that all people have “the right to have clear, meaningful, and culturally and linguistically appropriate communications.”

to be offered choices

to learn about yourself



NJC's Communication Bill of Rights

adapted by Scope

to be communicated with in a dignified manner

DONT WAIT!

There is NO evidence to suggest that children have to be a certain chronological age to benefit from AAC (Romski & Sevcik, 2005). One myth is the belief that introducing AAC at an early age will impede the development of verbal speech as the primary mode of communication.

Research has shown that the introduction of AAC actually improves verbal speech, EVEN when no speech therapy has been given (Ballinger, n.d.).

Early forms of AAC are seen in the use teaching sign language as early as 6-8 months of age.

Self-awareness begins around 15-24 months when children start recognizing themselves in a mirror or photograph.

Theory of mind develops around age five.

The AAC system should represent how they choose to see themselves.

MULTILINGUALISM AND AAC

MYTH BUSTING: Because this AAC user struggles learning one language, he/she will struggle learning two. --- FALSE!

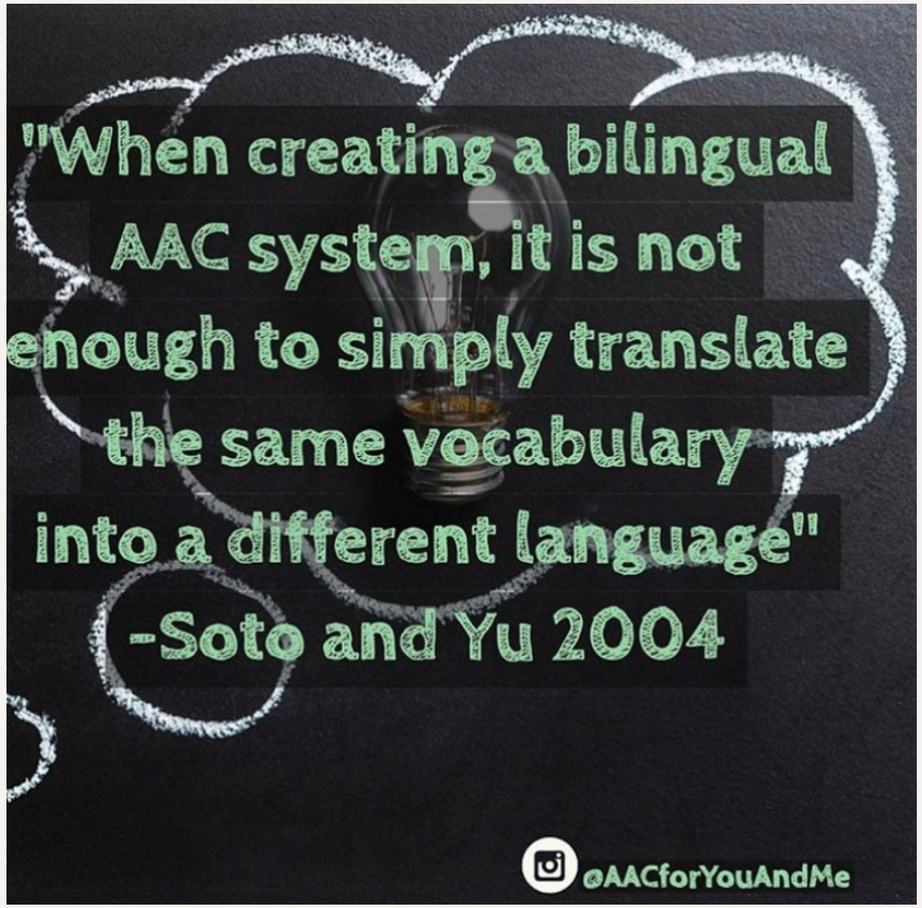
""There are no detrimental effects to the linguistic, cognitive, and social development of children, including those who use AAC...in fact maintenance of the home language is imperative!

Need for culturally accessible, family-centered "training" as opposed to "parent training." Needs to be respectful, compassionate, informative and reciprocal- Gloria Soto, 2021- PALSs training (McNamara, 2018, Angulo-Jimenes 2018, Guiberson 2013)

Research shows that once introduced to signs or unaided communication styles, Latino families preferred signs over high-tech AAC (McCord et al., 2004) and thought that AAC would be better used in the school settings (McCord et al., 2004, Blackstone, 1999; Huer et al., 2001.)

THE EARLIER THE BETTER WITH HIGH-TECH BILINGUAL AAC

CONSIDERATIONS FOR AAC USE IN HOME LANGUAGE



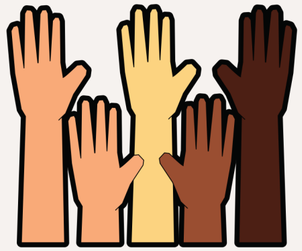
Modeling language is different because the syntax is different (eg: Spanish: noun+adjective, English: adjective+noun)

-It's not the same thing to translate icons or place a Spanish word on an English icon.

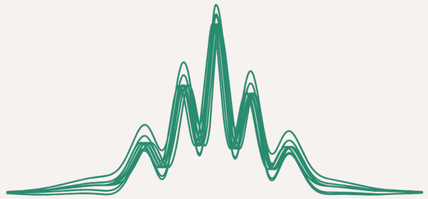
"DO NOT TRANSLATE CORE WORD LISTS!"- Dr. Gloria Soto, 2021

PERSONALIZATION OF AAC

ICONS



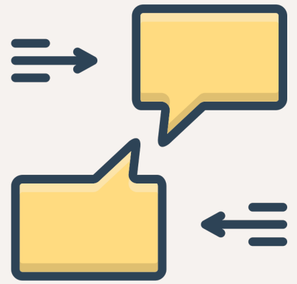
VOICE



LANGUAGE OR DIALECT

VOCABULARY

CODESWITCHING



INCLUDE THE STUDENT AND FAMILY IN THE ICON AND LANGUAGE SELECTION PROCESS

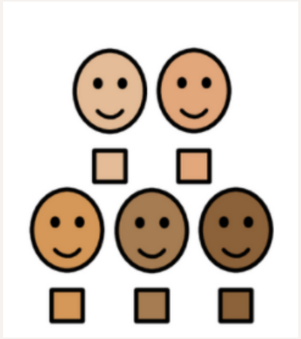
"Personalization of the device, whether light tech or high tech, needs to happen immediately with the student's unique cultural or linguistic considerations in mind. Engaging the student in vocabulary and symbol selection...embeds the chosen vocabulary word/phrase and its associated symbol into the student's lexicon, possessing intrinsic meaning and value to the student."

"Vocabulary that includes extended family (or nontraditional families), heritage foods, religious engagement, cultural greetings, and so forth may also assist in bridging the AAC home–school divide. Icon selection also plays a significant role in facilitating family acceptance of AAC in the home. Not all vocabulary is cross-linguistically available, and not all images are appropriate across cultures."

Bridging the School and Home Divide for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Families Using Augmentative and Alternative Communication Systems (2018) Mindel & John

PHYSICAL FEATURES

SKIN TONE



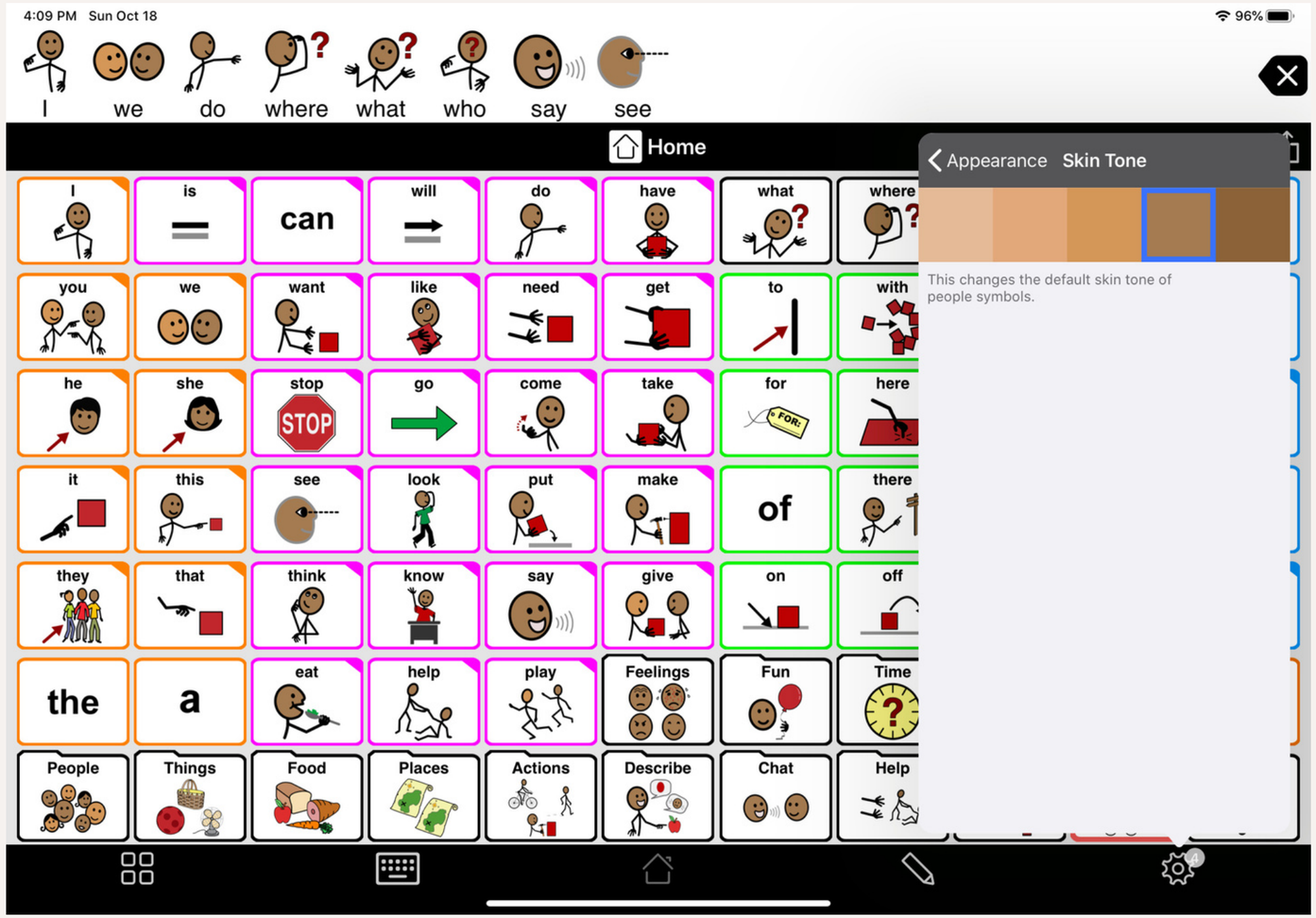
SymbolStix

Smarty Symbols

Mayer-Johnson
PCS

Unity/UNIDAD
Symbols

CURRENT WORK AROUNDS



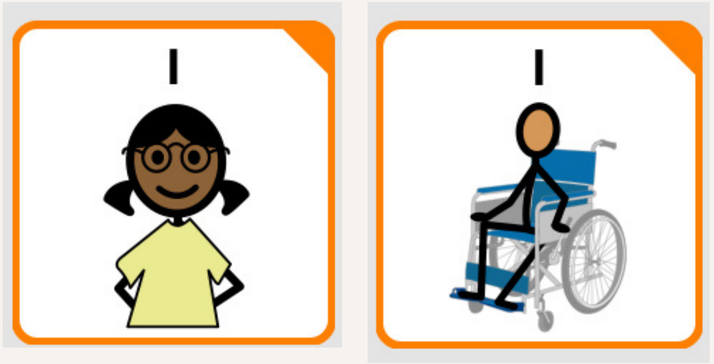
SKIN TONE

Proloquo2Go

YouTube: Diverse AAC

PHYSICAL FEATURES

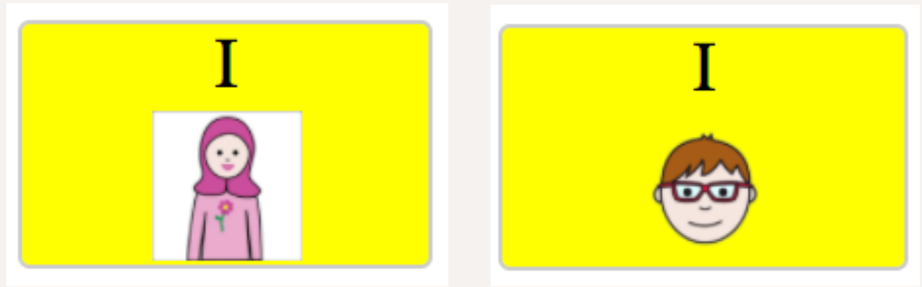
OTHER PHYSICAL FEATURES



SymbolStix

Smarty Symbols

Mayer-Johnson PCS



Open Symbols

LANGUAGE FEATURES

LAMP WFL/Unity

- LAMP WFL is offered in English & Spanish/English
- Unity & UNIDAD language systems
- Unity has been translated in 12+ languages

Snap Core First

- Available in English (US/CAN/UK), Spanish (SP/MX), French (FR/CAN), Portuguese (BR/PT), Chinese, Italian, & 9 more languages

TouchChat WP

- Currently available in English, Spanish, Arabic, Canadian French, & Hebrew

Proloquo2Go

- Currently offered in English and bilingual Spanish-English, English-French, Dutch-French

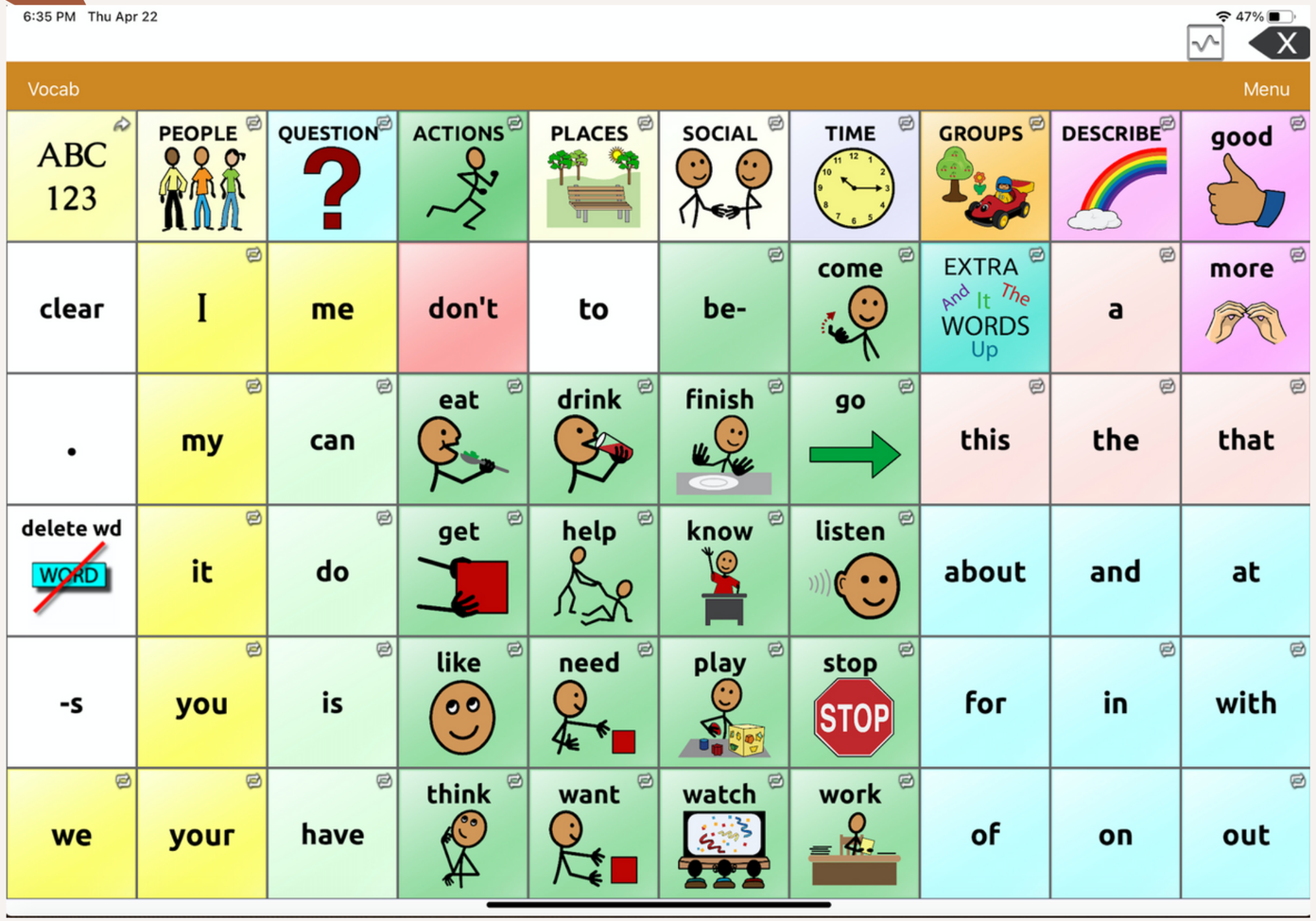
CoughDrop

- CoughDrop is available in English, Spanish, German, Arabic, Dutch, Portuguese, French, Catalan, Czech, Danish, Swedish, Norwegian, Nynorsk. Greek, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Chinese, Polish, Russian, Turkish

Avaz

- Currently available in English (US/UK/AUS), 6 Indian languages, French, Danish, Icelandic, Swedish, Sinhala, & Tamil

CURRENT WORK AROUNDS



CODE SWITCHING

Example: TouchChat WP

YouTube: Diverse AAC

VOICE/DIALECT FEATURES

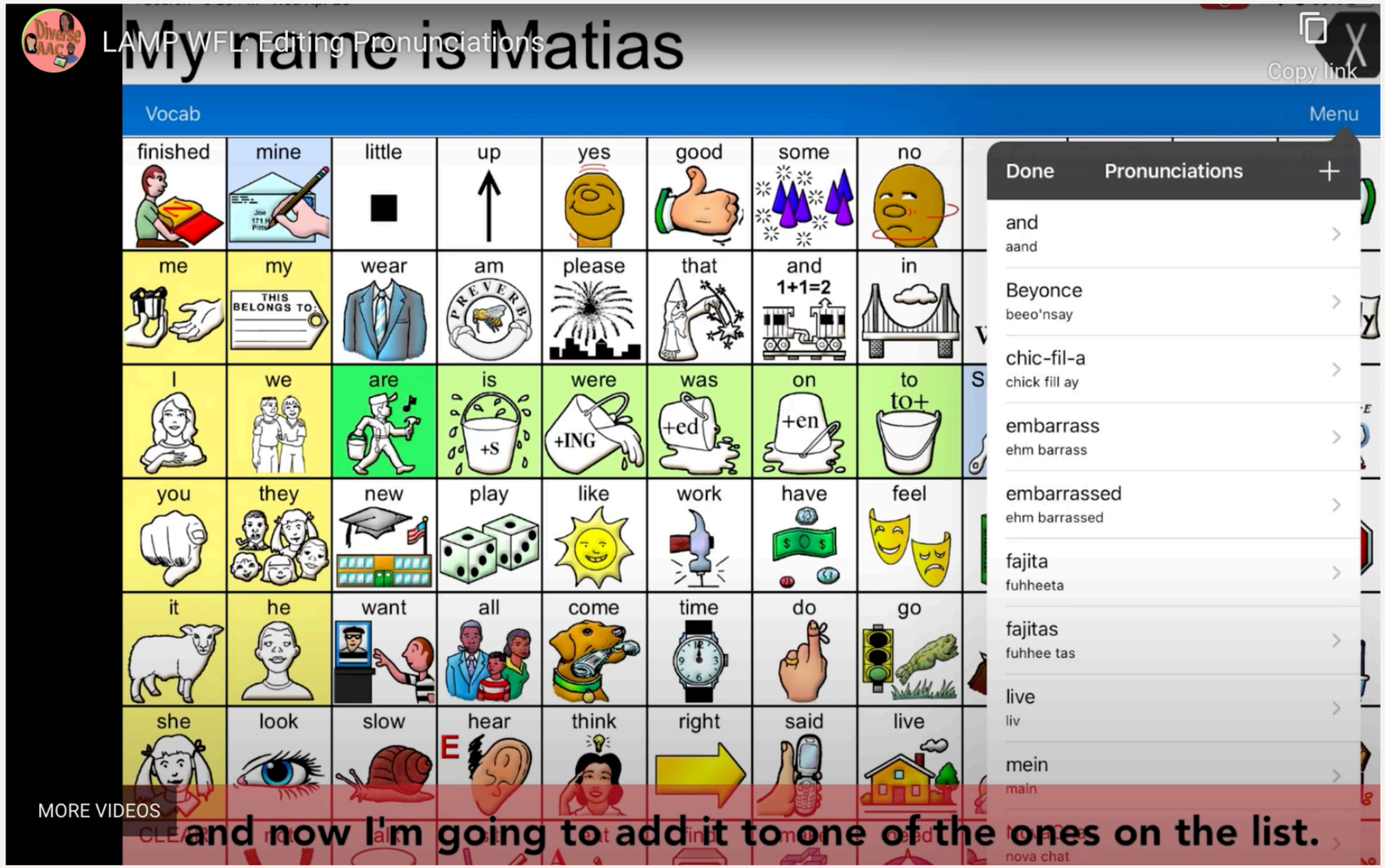
ACAPELA

VOICE KEEPER

VOCAL ID

PRONUNCIATIONS

CURRENT WORK AROUNDS



PRONUNCIATION

Example: LAMP WFL

YouTube: Diverse AAC

VOCABULARY FEATURES

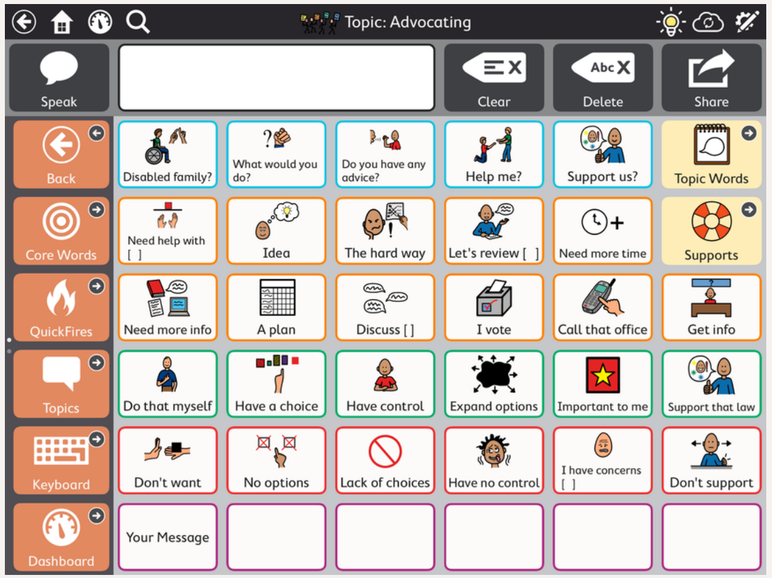
GENDER INCLUSIVE

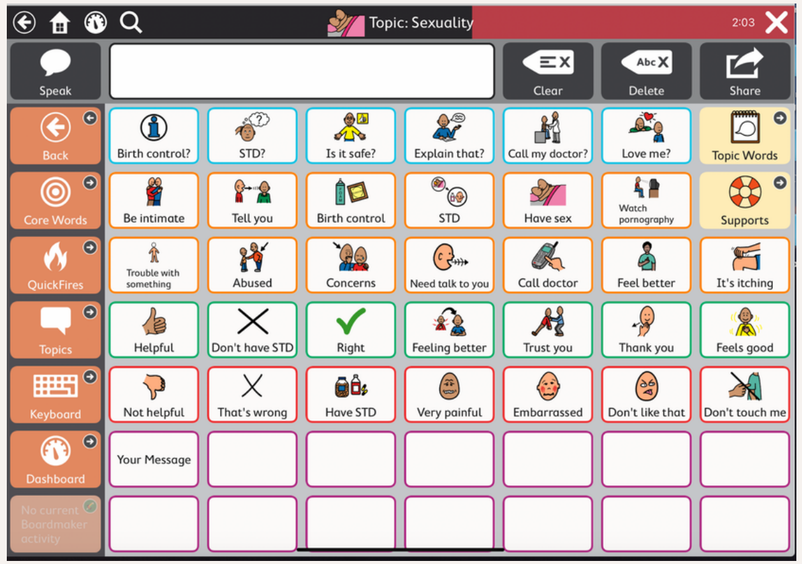
PRONOUNS

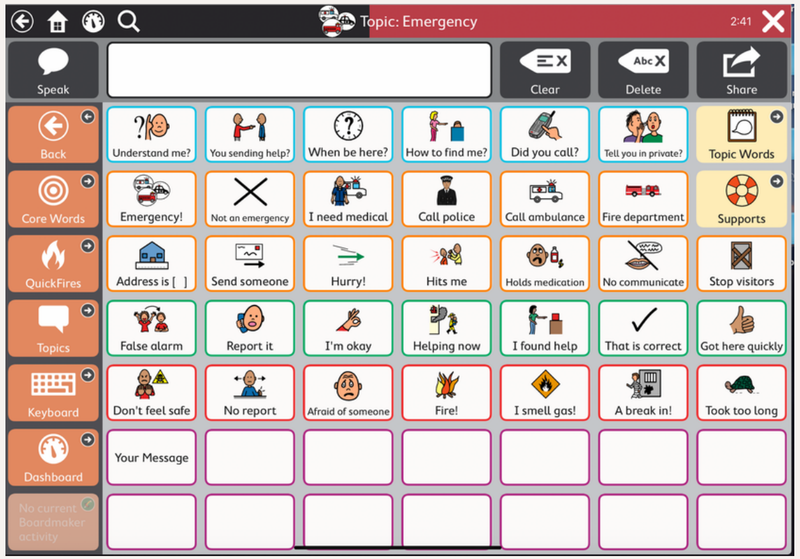
ADVOCACY

ADULT VOCABULARY

CURRENT WORK AROUNDS







MATURE VOCABULARY & ADVOCACY

Example:

SNAP CORE FIRST

YouTube: Diverse AAC

CURRENT WORK AROUNDS

DIVERSE PRONOUNS

ProloQuo2Go

YouTube: Diverse AAC

COMING SOON!

TAMIRA

ASSISTIVEWARE

PRC/SALTILLO

TOBII DYNAVOX

CURRENT WORK AROUNDS

LessonPix

Meet the New LessonPix Characters

The LessonPix Characters folder contains symbols of specific people of different ages, cultures, race, and disabilities in various positions. While most of the people in the clip art library are drawn fairly neutral and can be changed to any skin tone, these characters each have an uniqe identity.

These characters work well with our Symbol Builder. Because the characters are shown in different positions, you can build custom images of one child, the same child, doing different tasks. (Hint: use a white circle or square to hide parts of images or people to replace with the character.)

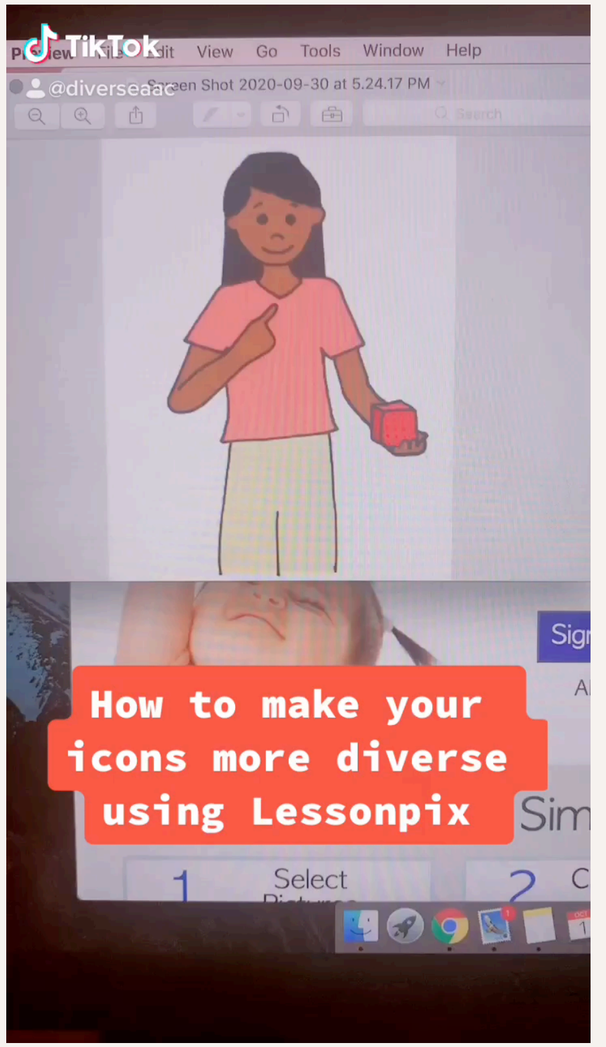
Use Symbol Builder to make new symbols with the same character.

And in addition, do not forget our Re-Color and Customize tool. This will allow you to further customize the symbols to match your specific needs. (Hint: Add pony tails, glasses, or other details in the Symbol Builder, and then change the color.)

Use the Re-Color Tool to customize

-Pros: low cost materials

-Change skin tones and create characters



The Future of AAC

WE ARE HOPEFUL!

- AAE Male & Child Voice -Coming soon on more devices!
- Physical features (hair, eye color, glasses, cultural attire, etc.)
- Dialect variations
- Culturally-relevant vocabulary sets

TALK TO US

WE'RE READY TO ANSWER YOUR QUESTIONS

Email

diverseaac@gmail.com

Instagram

@diverseaac

YouTube Channel

Diverse AAC