NORFOLK SPECIAL EDUCATION
PARENTS ADVISORY COUNCIL (SEPAC) PRESENTS

Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) Devices

An informational night with

LINDA CULLEN

MEd, MS, CCC-SLP

Join Us

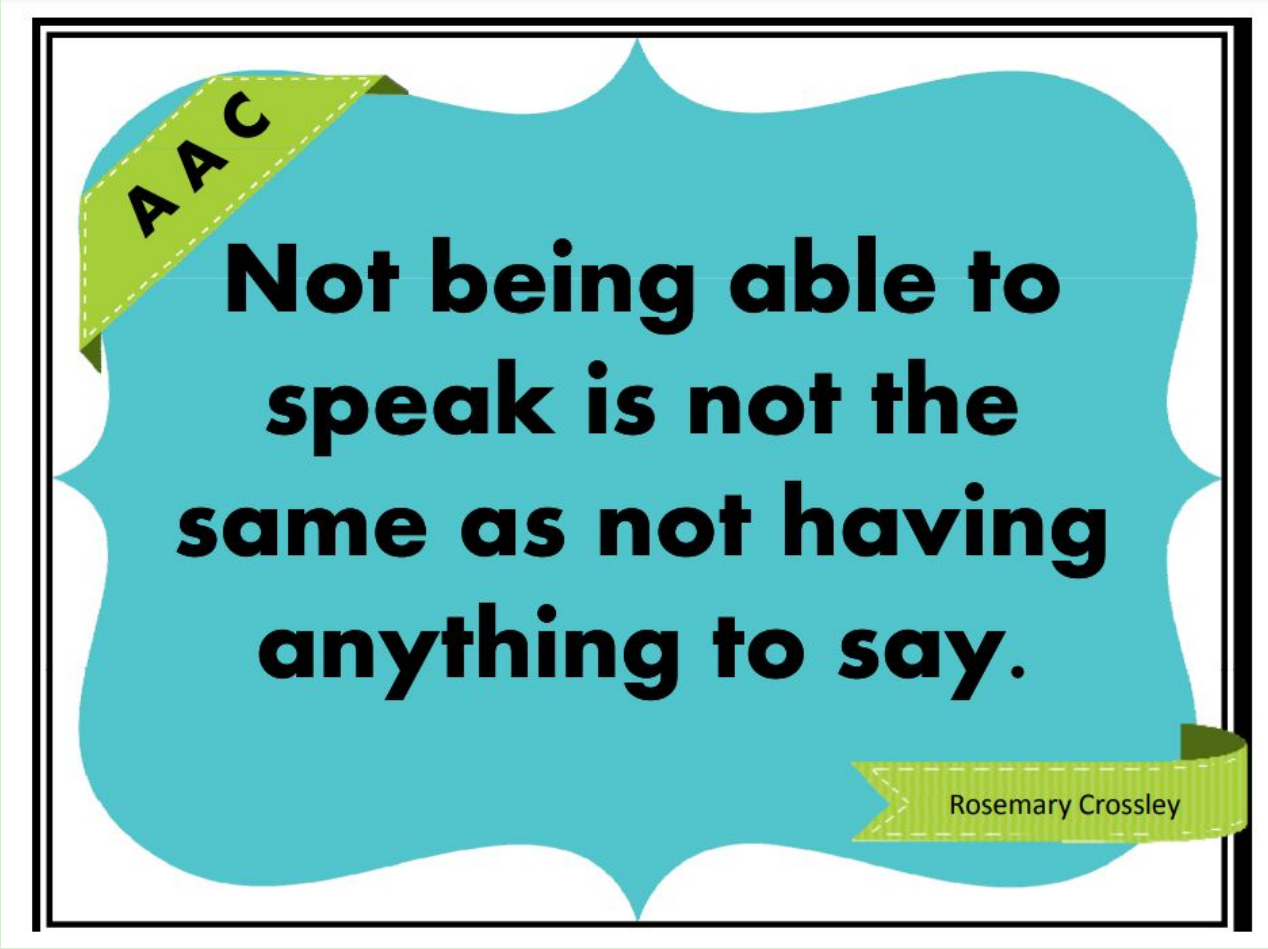
MARCH 14

7:00 - 8:00 PM

FREEMAN KENNEDY LIBRARY

Topics for today

- About me
- My role in Norfolk
- Talking about AAC
- Using AAC at home
- Parent Questions

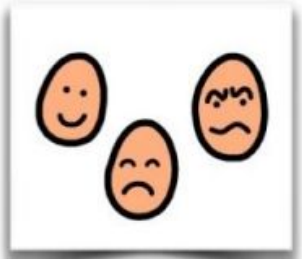

AAC
Not being able to speak is not the same as not having anything to say.
Rosemary Crossley

My Communication Bill of Rights

I have the right to my own friends and social life.

I have the right to ask for what and who I want and where to go.

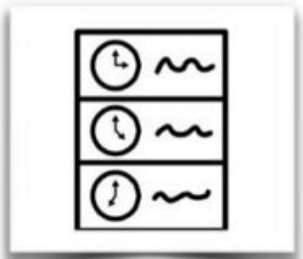
I ALWAYS have the right to say, “no!”



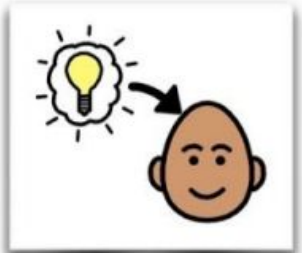
I have the right to say what I feel.

I have the right to make my own, real, choices.

I have the right to say what think.



I have the right to ask for, get and give information.

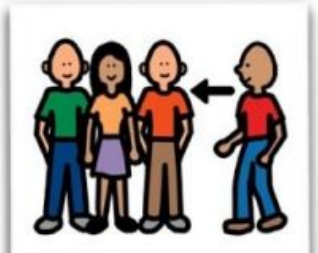


I have the right to know about the people in my life and everything happening to me.

I have the right to be taught to communicate and have what I need.

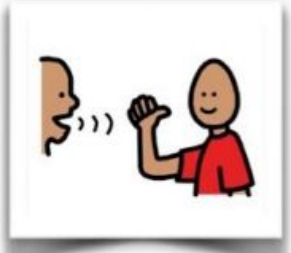
I have the right to have my communication system (and other tools), to have them working and to be with people who know how to set up, use and fix my communication system.

I have the right to be heard and answered, even if I can't have what I want.



I have the right to be part of my community

I have the right to be treated with respect.



I have the right to be talked to and not about.

I have the right with be talked with in a way I understand.

Adapted from the NJC Communication Bill of Rights 2016, ASHA by Kate Ahern, M.S.Ed Mayer-Johnson Communication Symbols Used with Permission

Parent Qs

- Who owns the AAC device and is responsible for updates, backing up and tech bugs?
- Does the district work with a student's outside SLP to connect home and school?
- How is the size of the AAC device determined?
- Does the district leverage one specific app like TouchChat or ProLoquo?
- How is the students device mapped to match their skill set and the school's curriculum?

Communication should be FUN!!

THERE ARE SO MANY REASONS TO COMMUNICATE!

COMMENTING	ASKING FOR HELP	GREETING	ASKING QUESTIONS
SHARING INFORMATION	PROTESTING	EXPRESSING OPNIONS	JOKING
REQUESTING	SELF ADVOCACY	NEGOTIATING	EXPRESSING AFFECTION
GETTING ATTENTION	PRETENDING	TELLING STORIES	AND MANY MORE

THE AAC COACH

Mrs. SPEECHIEP

Talking about AAC

Receptive Language

INPUT

The ability to understand what is being said

Expressive Language

OUTPUT

How the child communicates

Many of our students struggle with Receptive AND Expressive Language

Some of our students understand much more than they can express

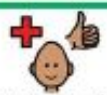
Visual supports can help!!

Visual supports can be picture symbols, photographs, drawings, objects, or written words

Picture symbols are how we represent language for students who aren't reading yet

PEOPLE	QUESTIONS	PLACES	SOCIAL	TIME	GROUPS	ABC 123
I	can	to	ACTIONS	come	good	DESCRIBE
my	do	drink	eat	feel	a	more
it	have	finish	help	go	the	that
you	is	like	listen	play	stop	EXTRA And It The WORDS Up
your	don't	.	want	watch	work	clear

Topic: Meals

When eating?	What having?	Ready yet?	Can I have different food?	You hungry?
I am hungry	I am thirsty	Want to eat	I have allergies	I want different food
Sit with me	Ready to eat	Let's eat out	More please	Help me
Thanks!	Hits the spot	 That is healthy	It is delicious	This is my favorite
Don't like it	Don't want anything	That is awful	That is not healthy	Yuck!

If we want kids to use symbols to communicate, we need to use symbols to communicate with them

> *The average 18-month-old has been exposed to 4,380 hours of oral language at a rate of 8 hours/day from birth. A child who has a communication system (AAC) and receives speech/language therapy 2 times/week for 20-30 minutes will reach the same amount of language exposure (in their AAC language) in 84 years.*
>
> **Jane Korsten, SLP**

www.assistiveware.com

Feature Matching is the process SLPs use to support AAC recommendations

AAC at home

Helping your child be the best communicator they can be!!

YOU are the EXPERT!
YOU know your child BEST!!

Getting started with AAC at home

- What is your favorite or most relaxed time of day at home with your child?
- Are there certain routines you do everyday at home? Does your child have a way to participate?
- What is the most challenging time of day?
- What fun activities does your child like to do with family members?

Be a good communication partner

Want to Be a Good Communication Partner for Your AAC Learner?

Do these things!

- Talk to and with them using their AAC
- Respond to any attempt by your learner to communicate (i.e., any initiation)
- Respect and respond to all forms of communication
- Be willing to put their communication first (i.e., recognize it as more important than the activity and what you have to say)
- Give them plenty of time to communicate. It might feel awkward in the beginning. Get comfortable not immediately filling the silence.

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Modeling Without Expectation

It is OKAY to model with symbols or a device WITHOUT expecting a response!!

Why we need to embrace CORE VOCABULARY

CORE VOCABULARY is a small set of common words that represent roughly 80% of what we say. Fringe vocabulary is everything else.

Examples of core words

like

not

want

Go

I

you

do

stop

help

see

in

out

You can model CORE VOCABULARY in ANY SITUATION!!

Core words are harder to represent using picture symbols because they are abstract concepts. That means LOTS of modeling is needed.

FRINGE VOCABULARY is easier to represent using photos or picture symbols

Fringe words are context specific

PROPER NOUNS

- People names
- Pet names
- Restaurants
- Town/City
- School name

CATEGORY WORDS

- Food
- Colors
- Animals
- Art supplies
- Body parts

Fringe words are easier to learn. Core words are harder to learn, but the long term benefits are worth it!!

Tips for Modeling and being a great Communication Partner

AAC is a means for connection, not an activity unto itself. There has to be a real reason to interact. Make sure you're doing something worth talking about (from your learner's perspective).

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Follow their lead! Do and talk about things they are interested in! Notice what they are communicating using other strategies (e.g., gestures, facial expressions, body language). Model language that reflects that communication.

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Don't make assumptions about what your learner wants to say. Model 2-3 options on the AAC that relate to the moment. Use phrases like "maybe you're thinking," "perhaps," or "I wonder if you" to emphasize that you don't really know!

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Model "within their zone." For many learners, modeling 1-2 words above their current independent level can help show them next-level skills and accommodate attention.

Independent Skill

1 word messages
Requesting
Nouns
Unconjugated verbs

Skill to Model

2-3 word messages
Commenting
Verbs
Regular past tense (-ed)

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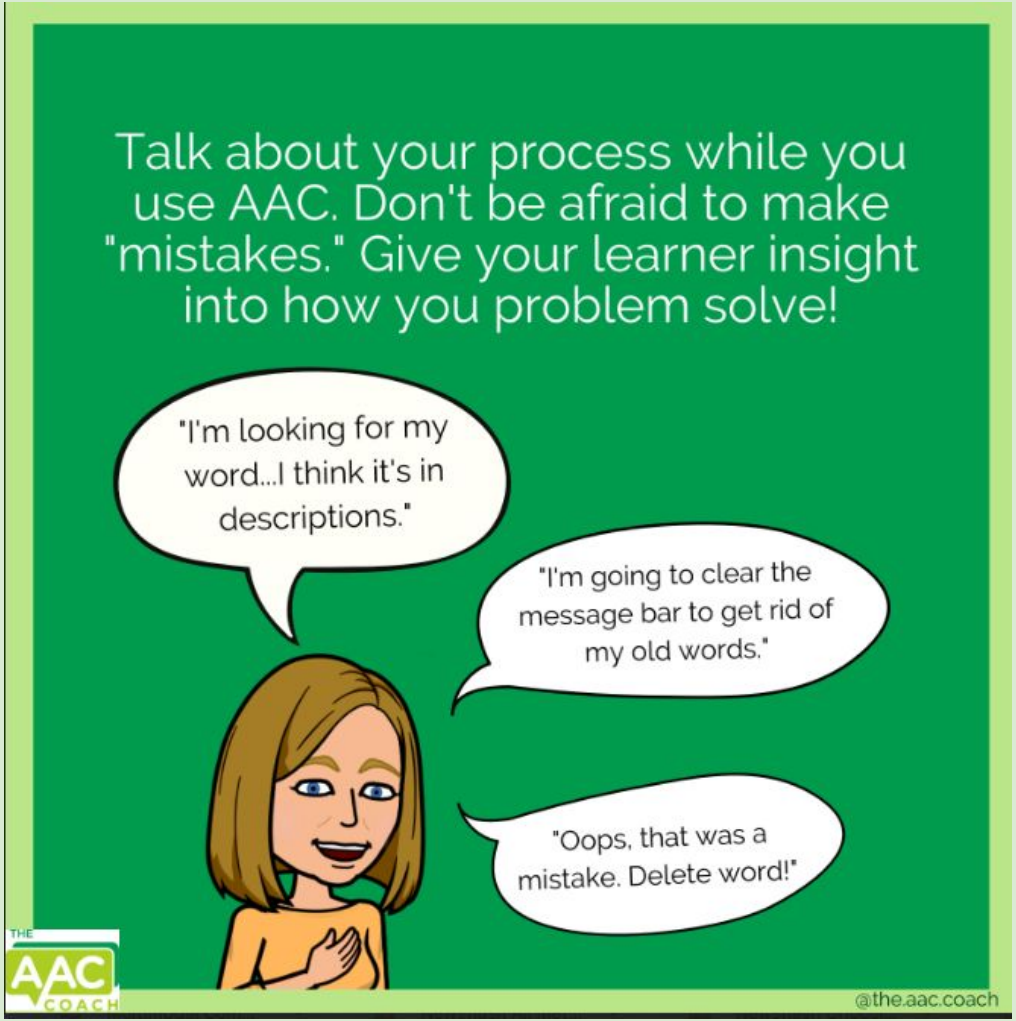
Talk about your process while you use AAC. Don't be afraid to make "mistakes." Give your learner insight into how you problem solve!
"I'm looking for my word...I think it's in descriptions."
"I'm going to clear the message bar to get rid of my old words."
"Oops, that was a mistake. Delete word!"
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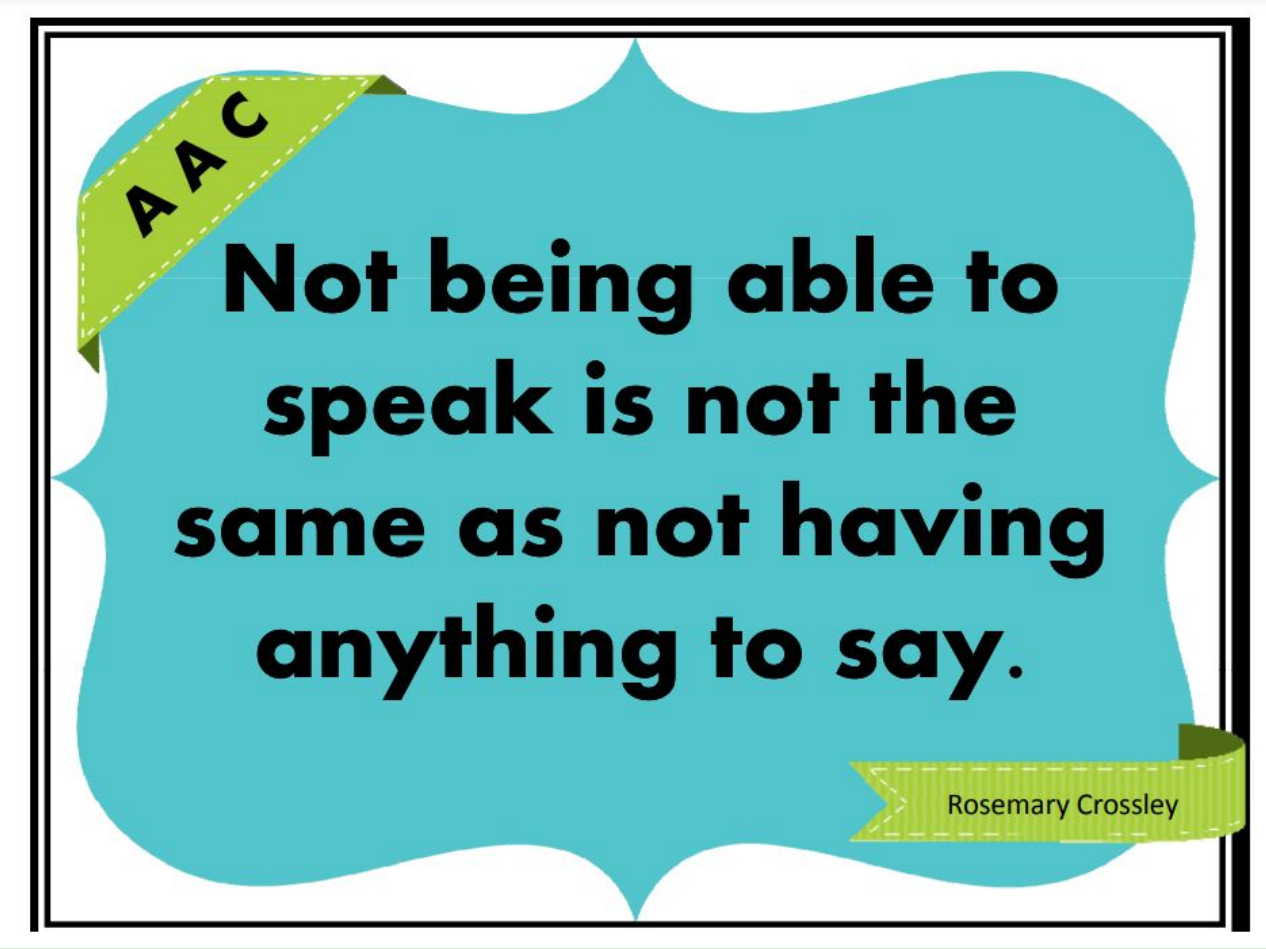
Attributing Meaning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