

***REAL LIFE AAC  
STRATEGIES:  
When There's No  
"App For That!"***

**OSSPEAC October 24, 2011**

9:45-11:15 AM ~AND~ 2:15 - 3:45

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**What About Apps.....**

- Apps (short for APPLICATIONS) are packages of computer software that run on tablets and smart phones and perform unique tasks. (Ex.: games, music player, graphics, etc.)
- iPads, iPods, and tablets are making their way into schools. They are easily attainable and have potential as valuable therapy tools
- The current perception appears to be that having the latest technology will provide the best answers to every situation.

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**What About Real Life.....**

- Typically our way of learning is through tangible hands on experiences
- Often getting the iPad, buying apps, and learning how to use them is not the primary concern. The ability to understand the concepts of communication and the motivation to communicate is the stumbling block
- The commercially available equipment was not designed with the durability required for the special needs population
- While the iPad could be one of many tools used to address students' needs, it is incapable of being a substitute for most real life hands on therapy approaches

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## WHEN THERE IS AN APP FOR THAT!

- When students can work and communicate independently
- When there's a need for interactive visual learning activities
- When students have the ability to comprehend abstract representations and concepts

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## WHEN YOU DON'T HAVE AN APP FOR THAT..... NOW WHAT!?

- Utilize activities that work towards the strengths of the student with disabilities
- Incorporate functional "slices of life" that the student can relate to and generalize in their daily communicative needs
- Implement hands on, concrete, interactive, and motivating activities

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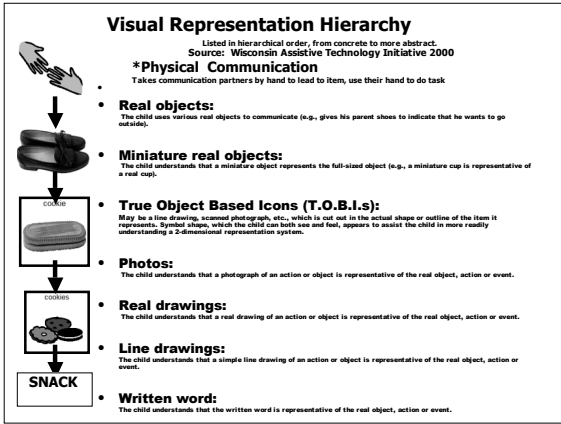
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### What is communication?

● A mutually understood message intentionally exchanged between at least two people.

**Parar**

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### Four Areas Of Challenges!

<b>Need</b>	<b>Team</b> Team's perception of the communicator's overall need to utilize additional methods of communication	<b>Need</b>	<b>Communicator</b> Self Motivation, Intentions, and Reasons to Communicate
<b>Knowledge</b>	<b>Team</b> Team's knowledge of AAC system and ability to assist and teach AAC to the Communicator	<b>Knowledge</b>	<b>Communicator</b> Ability to Comprehend and Utilize the AAC System

D'Amore's Key Indicators Of Augmentative Communication Systems Success

Assuming communicator is physically able to use AAC System.

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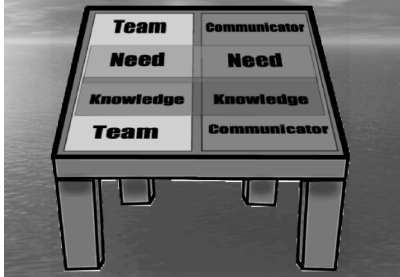
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**The AAC System is supported by these four factors like a table supported by four legs!**



D'Amore's Key Indicators Of Augmentative Communication Systems Success Table  
© Don D'Amore MA CCC-SLP 2008

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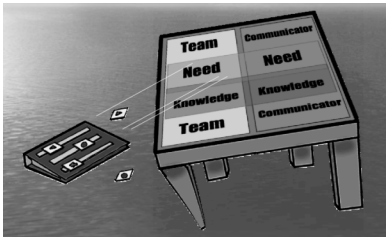
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**Without FOUR strong legs, the table may not be successful in supporting the AAC System!**

- Weak Table Leg = Wobbling AAC!



D'Amore's Key Indicators Of Augmentative Communication Systems Success Table  
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**CHALLENGE: The communicator needs to comprehend and utilize the communication system.**

**SOLUTIONS**

- Use structured predictable format when teaching. (LAMP, categorize, rationales)
- Start with vocabulary that is most pertinent and desired in the students' world
- Use natural settings when teaching the AAC System
- Encourage all appropriate responses

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## **CONTINUUM OF COMMUNICATION**

- **Dynavox states successful communication is primarily driven by three key factors;**
- **Age**
- **Environment**
- **Ability**
  - **1. Emergent**
  - **2. Context-Dependent**
  - **3. Independent**

Dynavox, 2011

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## **ADVANCED/INDEPENDENT COMMUNICATOR**

- **Communicates at a level of typical peers**
- **Creates novel messages**
- **Use simple sentences**
- **Uses language for multiple purposes**

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## **SITUATIONAL/CONTEXT DEPENDENT COMMUNICATOR**

- **Varying understanding of basic language**
- **Comprehension of picture representations**
- **Follows directions, rules, and routines**
- **Needs minimum prompts and cues**
- **Communicative strengths lies within structured contexts**

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## INTRODUCTORY/ EMERGENT COMMUNICATOR

- Lacks an effective and consistent means of communication
- Communication attempts isolated to highly motivating situations
- Early stages of picture exchange
- Successful communication is reliant upon support of the communicative partner

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## Work within the abilities and interests of the student.

- **MOTIVATION IS THE KEY TO COMMUNICATION**
- Determine if what you want the student to communicate is your desire or their desire. This is important when considering motivation.
- Use materials, topics, vocabulary, and activities that the student has demonstrated a level of interest and/or ability.

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## Our REAL LIFE "App Store"!

	Primary- Ages 3-6 y	Middle - Ages 7-13 y	Upper- Ages 14-22y
Advanced/ Independent	Sentence strip symbols One symbol wallet ← Other typical expressive language		sentence building multi-symbol wallet activities →
Situational/ Context dependent	conversation binder adapted books Expanding expression	home to school daily journal bingo categories structured group talk	home to school daily journal menus categories emotions
Introductory/ Emergent communicator	pattern – Legos oatmeal/put in sort by object matching puzzles	pattern oatmeal w/objects sort by function matching puzzles	pattern – Mosaic oatmeal w/money sort money/silverware Matching puzzles

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**REAL LIFE APPS FOR:  
ADVANCED/INDEPENDENT  
COMMUNICATOR**

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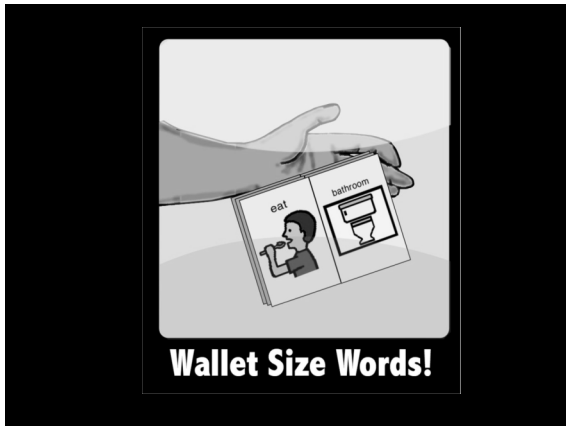
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## Involve Families in Expecting Expressive Communication

**From School...To Home**  
Private Communication, Expressive

**Classes that I had:**

**TODAY I BEHAVED:**

**For Lunch I ate:**

**Some special things:**

**From Home...To School**  
Private Communication, Expressive

**For Dinner I ate:**

**Things I did at home:**

**Things I played with:**

**Songs that we sang/Books we read:**

These are some extra special things I did at home:

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**REAL LIFE APPS FOR:  
SITUATIONAL/CONTEXT  
DEPENDENT COMMUNICATOR**

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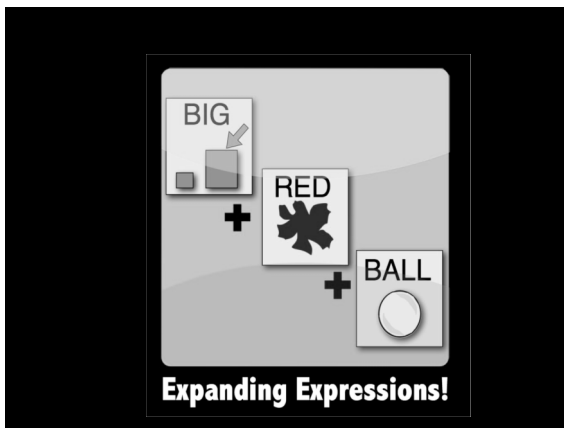
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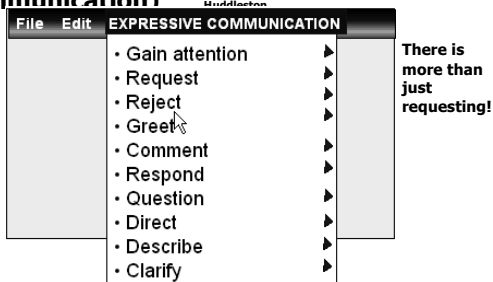
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**Select From the Menu of  
Expressive Communication!**  
(Develop an array of expressive  
communication)



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**Examples of some forms of Expressive Communication**

- Greet**  
good morning (sun icon), What's UP? (alien icon)
- Describe**  
smelly (hand holding nose), smells good (nose with flower)
- Clarify**  
big (arrow pointing to large square), pretzel (pretzel icon)
- Respond**  
where (question mark with arrows), what (question mark in box)
- Direct**  
stir (hand stirring spoon), clap hands (clapping hands icon)

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**Sort It Out!**

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**Fun Group Talking!**

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**REAL LIFE APPS FOR:  
INTRODUCTORY/  
EMERGENT COMMUNICATOR**

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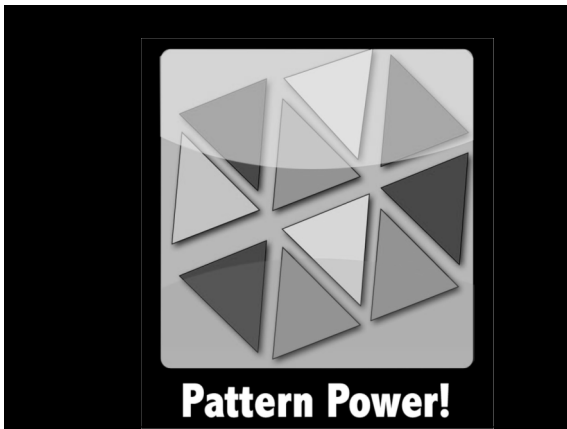
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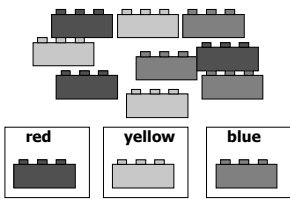
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**Pattern Making**

The student **EXPRESSES  
COMMUNICATION** to request the  
color piece they need to continue  
the pattern!



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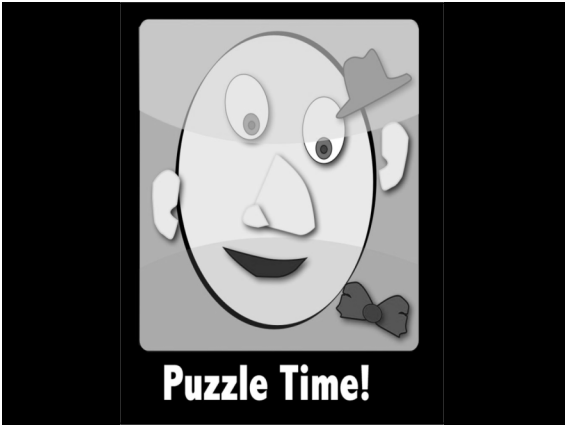
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The student **EXPRESSES COMMUNICATION** to request the parts they need to complete the puzzle!

hair	arm	leg
		
eyes	ear	mouth
		

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## WHEN COMMUNICATOR'S MOTIVATION IS AN ISSUE:

### TIPS

- Inventory student's interests and create scenarios that are interesting enough to facilitate communication
- Save some things just for communication
- Engineer situations where communication becomes needed/expected

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## #1 TIP! Expect Communication!

(Never give up on the student's expressive communication)

- Everyone CAN communicate!
- Individuals with Autism may begin speaking at any time.
- The better students understand structured communication, the greater likelihood of functional speech.
- Prompting for expressive communication takes planning!
- Are we successful only because we have lowered the bar too far?

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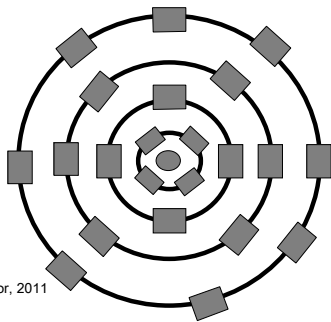
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Reflection: WHO IS TALKING TO OUR STUDENTS?

### Circle Of Friends:



Calculator, 2011

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## Available Online Resources

- <http://www.do2learn.com>
- This site has lots of free picture symbols
- <http://images.google.com/>
- Online Image Search
- <http://www.speakingofspeech.com/>
- Choose Material Exchange for downloads of premade materials
- **Other Web Resources**
  
- <http://www.icontalk.com>
- Icon Talk (From Icon to Ican)
- (Barbara Bloomfield's use of visual strategies to improve communication and behavior for autism/PDD)
  
- <http://www.pecs.com/>
  
- [www.thegrayscale.com](http://www.thegrayscale.com) Carol Gray's Social stories
  
- <http://www.teacch.com/>
- Internationally recognized program- structured approach to education of students with Autism

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- **Website: [www.mayer-johnson.com](http://www.mayer-johnson.com)**
  
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