

# Augmentative and Alternative Communication



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## What is AAC?

The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) defines Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) as all of the ways that someone communicates besides signing/talking. Everybody has a right to communication and AAC may assist individuals who are unable to communicate fluently with American Sign Language (ASL) or spoken language.

Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Pointing to pictures (e.g., Pragmatic Organization Dynamic Display - PODD)
- Exchanging pictures or symbols for desired item/activity (e.g., Picture Exchange Communication System-PECS)
- Using a voice output device
- Programs on iPad (e.g., Language Acquisition through Motor Planning- LAMP)
- Eye gaze boards
- Switches
- Mechanical
- Low touch (require less force to depress)
- Sensor/proximity
- Sip/puff
- Voice/sound
- Scanning devices
- Visual
- Auditory
- Partner assisted

## AAC & Children

Deaf and hard of hearing children have the ability to develop signed and/or spoken language(s) when they have access. AAC is often beneficial with deaf and hard of hearing children who have additional needs that affect their ability to fully develop ASL and/or spoken language. These children may benefit from use of AAC to either provide a mode of communication and/or a bridge to developing ASL and/or spoken language skills. As with other modalities, the earlier you start the better. Children with obvious additional needs that impact ASL and/or spoken language development should consider use of AAC in early intervention.

## AAC Resources

- <https://aaclanguage.com>
- <https://aacinstitute.org>
- [https://ehdimeeting.org/Archive/2016/System/Uploads/pdfs/Poster\\_AutumnSanderson\\_2077.pdf](https://ehdimeeting.org/Archive/2016/System/Uploads/pdfs/Poster_AutumnSanderson_2077.pdf)
- <https://courses.language1st.org/courses/asl-and-aac>

Single sign use and gestures may be considered AAC in some cases; however, American Sign Language (ASL) is not considered AAC because it is a natural, fully formed language of its own.



# AAC Considerations Flowchart

