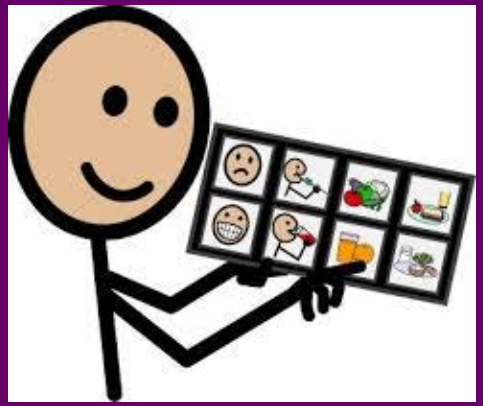
AAC* & Core Vocabulary



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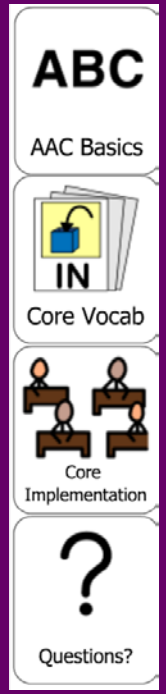
Northeast Metro Intermediate School District 916

*Augmentative & Alternative Communication

Schedule



AAC Basics

Core Vocabulary Introduction

Core Vocabulary Implementation

Summary/Resources/Questions

What is Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC)?

- AAC includes all forms of communication (other than oral speech) that are used to express thoughts, needs, wants, and ideas.
  - Sign language, gestures, communication apps, communication books, picture symbols, speech generating devices, etc….

What are the different types of AAC?

- Low-tech AAC
  - Picture boards, CORE boards, PECS books, communication strips, gestures, pointing, ASL
  - Battery operated voice output systems
    - Big Mack switch, Step-by-Step switch, GoTalk

What are the different types of AAC?

- High-tech AAC
  - Speech Generating Devices (SGDs) / Voice Output Communication Aids (VOCAs)
    - iPads (communication apps), Dynavox devices, Talk to Me Technologies devices, Prentke Romich devices

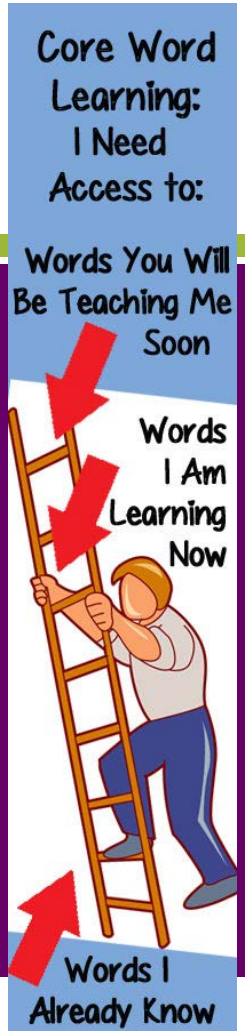
Who requires AAC?

- Any student whose verbal speech and language is not functional for meeting their wants/needs
  - Nonverbal, limited verbal, verbal but highly unintelligible
- *ANY* nonverbal student can learn to use and benefit from AAC
  - There are **NO** prerequisites

Definitions for today

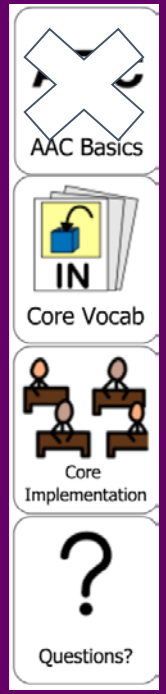
- AAC: using symbols to communicate
  - Sign = sign
  - Gestures = gestures
- Nonverbal or AAC user: nonverbal, limited verbal, verbal highly unintelligible, any person who may need, benefit from, or use AAC

How do you decide what to use?!?!?



- How do we know what vocabulary to provide to someone who uses AAC??
  - Your speech language pathologist can help!
- This is where core vocab is key.
- AAC for now and AAC for the future.

Schedule



~~AAC Basics~~

Core Vocabulary Introduction

Core Vocabulary Implementation

Summary/Resources/Questions

A quick poll

Show of hands!

- Who knows what core vocabulary is?
- Who uses core vocabulary?

Core vocabulary

- Small set of high-frequency words
- Can be used across many contexts
- Flexible!

Core vocabulary

85% of spoken language is made up of 250-300 words

What about other words?

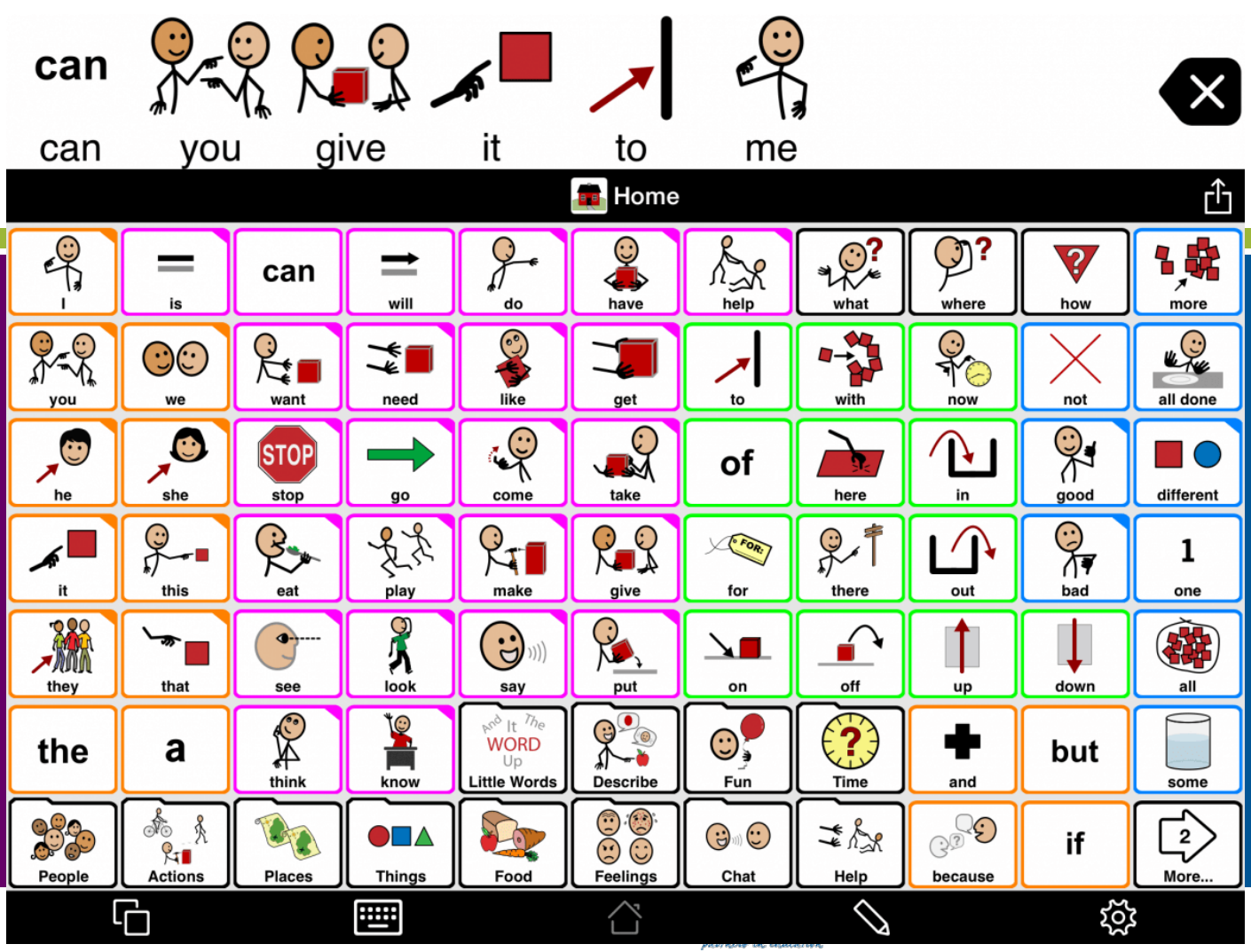
- Not core vocabulary = fringe vocabulary
- Also important! But less high-frequency

Core vocabulary

- Build expressive AND receptive language skills
- Using core to communicate
- BUT still teaching fringe to build receptive knowledge

Core vocabulary examples

- Can be low-tech or high-tech
- Personalized per student, or more general for teaching


can
can you give it to me
Home
I
is
can
will
do
have
help
what
where
how
more
you
we
want
need
like
get
to
with
now
not
all done
he
she
STOP
stop
go
come
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of
here
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good
different
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this
eat
play
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give
for
there
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one
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that
see
look
say
put
on
off
up
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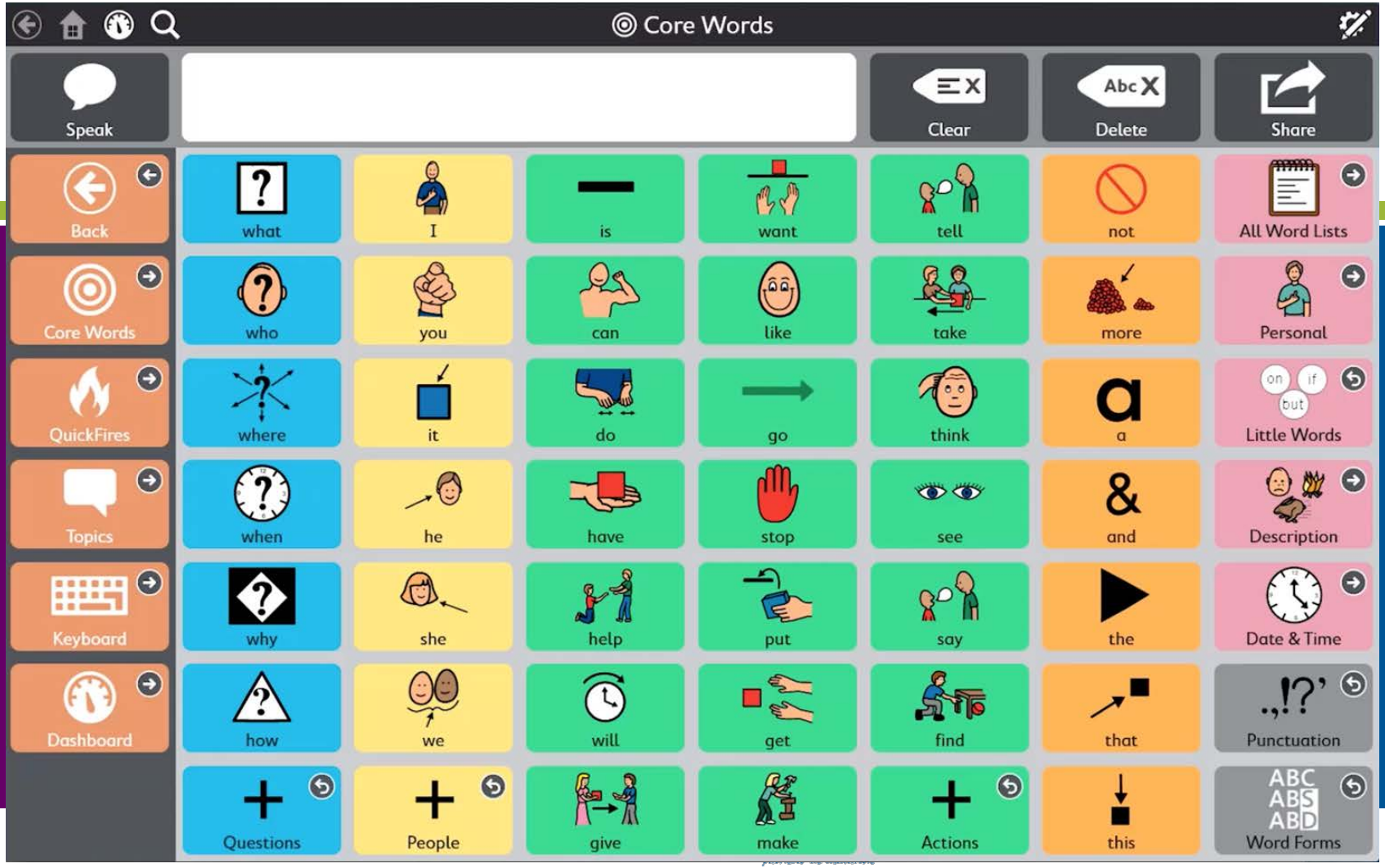
a
think
know
And It The WORD Up Little Words
Describe
Fun
Time
and
but
some
People
Actions
Places
Things
Food
Feelings
Chat
Help
because
if
2 More...


Core Words
Speak
Clear
Delete
Share
Back
Core Words
QuickFires
Topics
Keyboard
Dashboard
what
I
is
want
tell
not
All Word Lists
who
you
can
like
take
more
Personal
where
it
do
go
think
a
Little Words
on
if
but
when
he
have
stop
see
and
Description
why
she
help
put
say
the
Date & Time
how
we
will
get
find
that
Punctuation
Questions
People
give
make
Actions
this
Word Forms

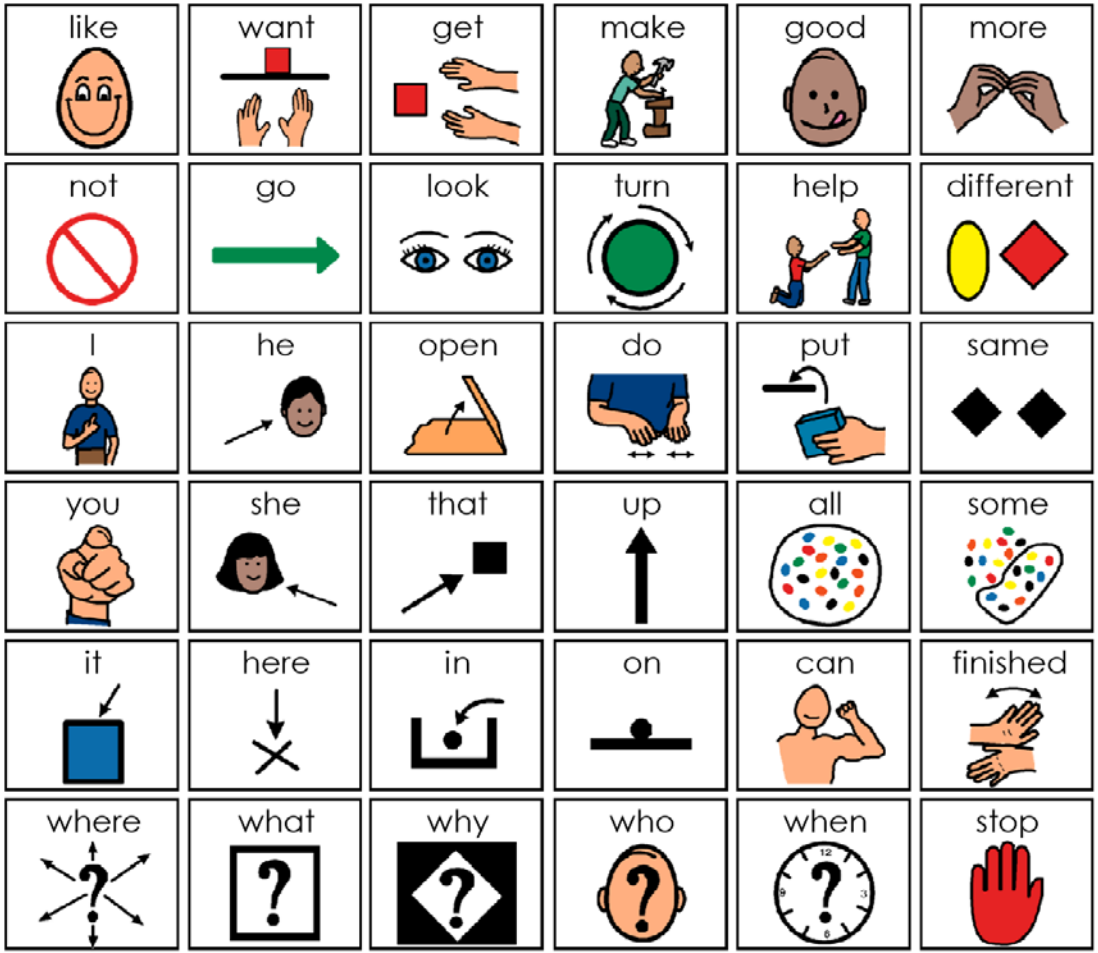
Could you repeat that please

Vocab | Menu

Vocab | Menu

ABC 123	PEOPLE	QUESTN	ACTIONS	SOCIAL	PLACES	TIME	GROUPS	DESCRB	good
clear	I	me	to	come	that	a-	the	and	more
.	my	is	eat	drink	finish	get	all	at	COLORS
EXTRA And It The WORDS Up	it	can	go	help	open	put	in	for	on
here	you	do	like	play	read	stop	out	up	off
yes	your	no	want	take	tell	turn	watch	down	with

I
it
who
what
when
again
now
that
this
trouble
me-myself
my - mine
not
come
do-does-did
ready
how
finished
all gone
bad
you - your
drink
eat
get
give
go
where
big
different
good
hear / listen
help
like
look / see
make
put
away
happy
little
more
say / tell
stop
STOP
take
turn
want
here
there
sad
sick
silly



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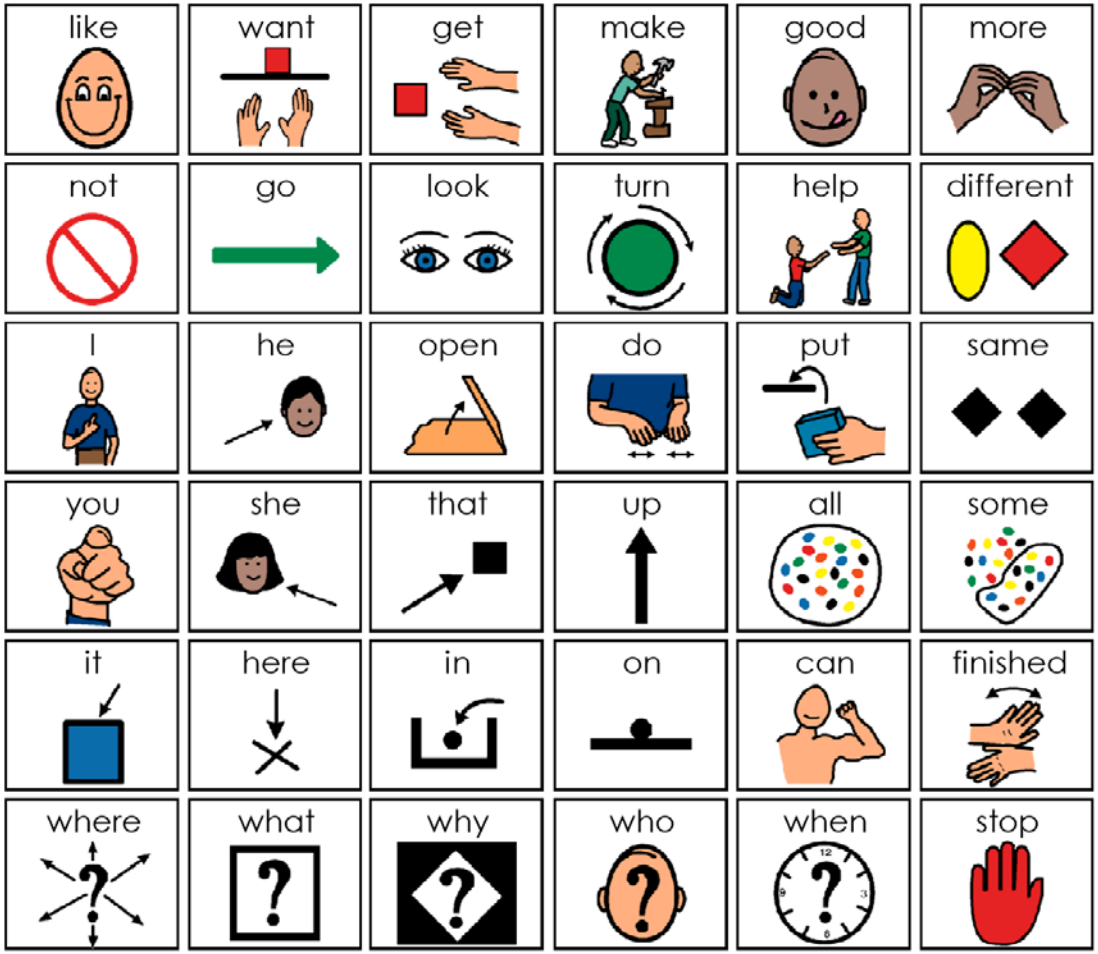
Considerations for AAC/core systems

- Add a QWERTY keyboard to your core
  - So if the word isn't there you can type it!
- Customize by adding fringe to your core
  - Academic specific (e.g. colors, shapes, animals), student specific (e.g. choices, family members)
- Don't underestimate
- Always have a low-tech back up

What did we choose and why?

- Project-core 36 location core board
- Evidence based
  - They all are, but this one is well explained
- Pre-made materials
- Connected with four blocks
- Easy to use and implement



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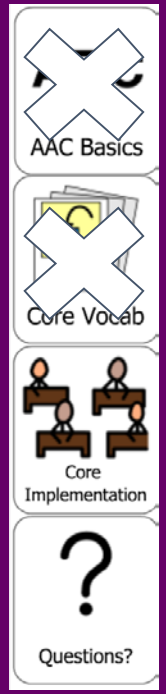
Core and alternative access

- Project-core has examples for alternative access
- Including:
  - 3D symbols for LIKE, NOT, and GO
  - Symbols for low-vision
  - 4-location boards for physical impairments
    - In 2X2 and 1X4 layout
- Note - always have all words available, even if it's across multiple pages!

Schedule



~~AAC Basics~~

~~Core Vocabulary Introduction~~

Core Vocabulary Implementation

Summary/Resources/Questions

Core vocabulary implementation

- Attribute meaning
- Encourage communication
- Worthwhile topic/context

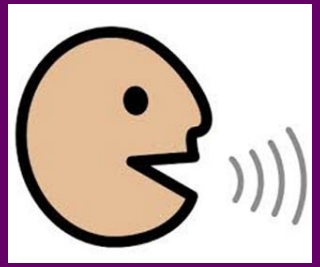
Core vocabulary implementation

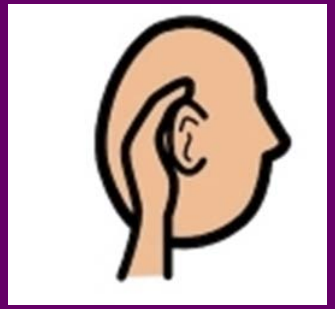
- Teach using consistent core
- Model using the student's system
  - Well designed communication systems will have core vocabulary included
- Two main pieces
  - Explicit instruction
  - Aided language stimulation

Aided Language Stimulation

Simply, modeling language using symbols

Theory behind aided language stimulation



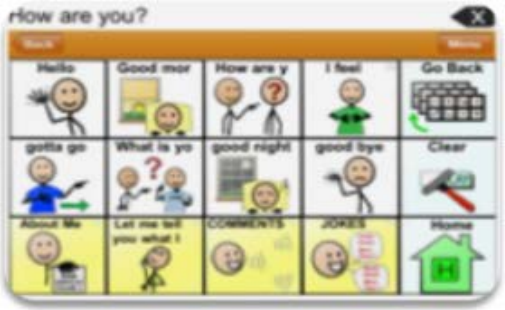


- Typically developing children learn by listening to spoken adult models
- Children who use AAC do not have models in their mode of communication
- AAC users lag behind typically developing children in language acquisition
- Input → Output
  - MISMATCH

Spoken Language

Spoken Language

Spoken Language



??????

Aided Language

Aided Language

BY 18 MONTHS
babies have heard
4,380 HOURS
OF SPOKEN LANGUAGE
and we don't expect them to be fluent speakers
YET
If AAC learners only see symbols modeled for communication twice weekly for 20-30 minutes, it will take
84 YEARS
for them to have the same exposure to aided language as an 18 month old has to spoken language.
statistic from Jane Korsten - QIAT Listserv 2011
photo by Rachael Langley - AAC Specialist

How-to

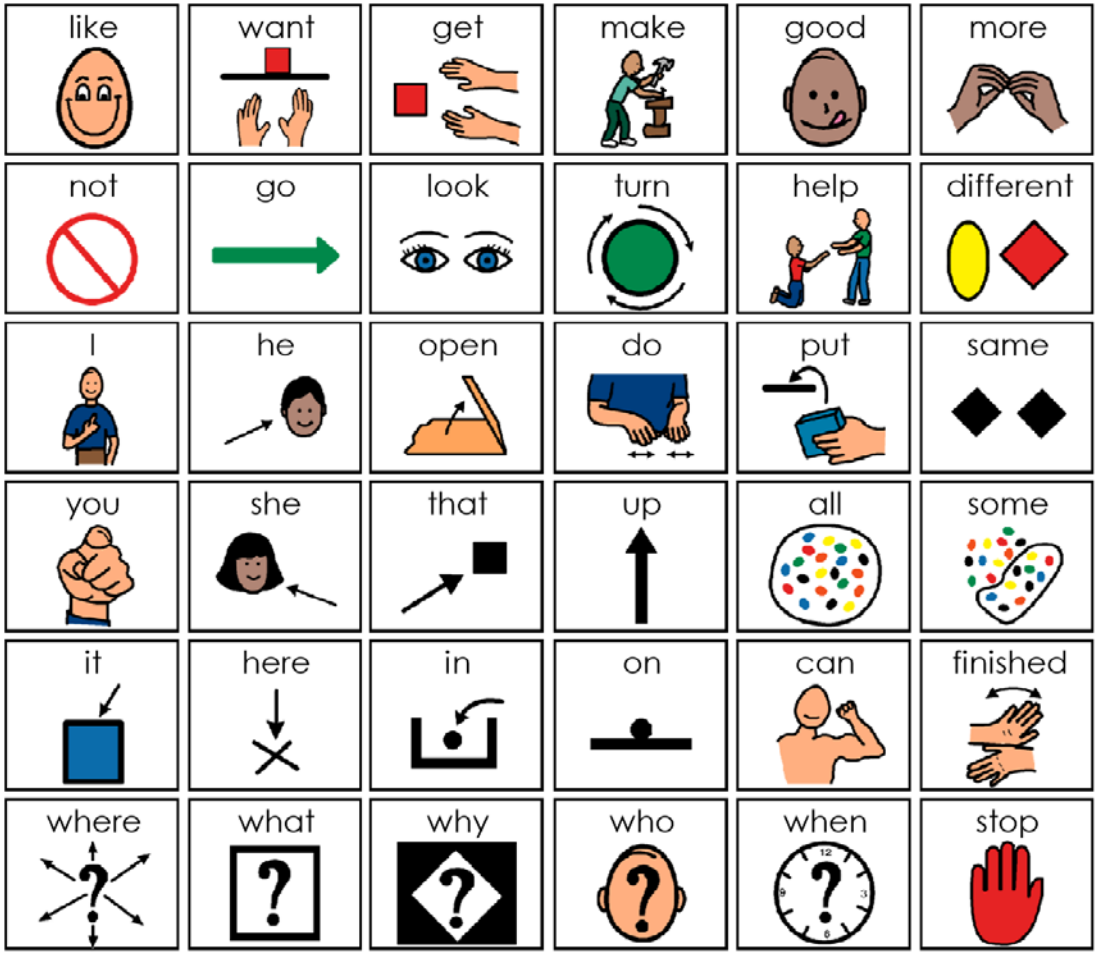
MODEL MODEL MODEL, TEACH TEACH TEACH

- You are not testing!
- Share information, make comments, ask questions, be social (greetings etc.)
- Can use a variety of different modalities
  - Different symbols (PCS, SymbolStix, Unity)
  - High-tech (iPad, dedicated device, different apps)
  - Low-tech (book, PODD, sheets)

Examples of aided language stimulation

Let’s practice with Core!

- Choose a class
  - Art, science, or gym
- As a group, we will come up with what you could model during your activity using core!



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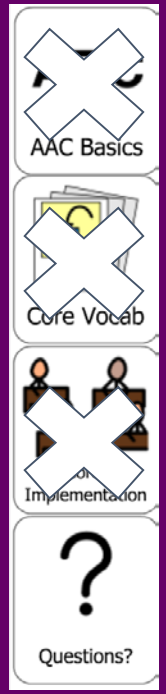
Schedule



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Summary/Resources/Questions

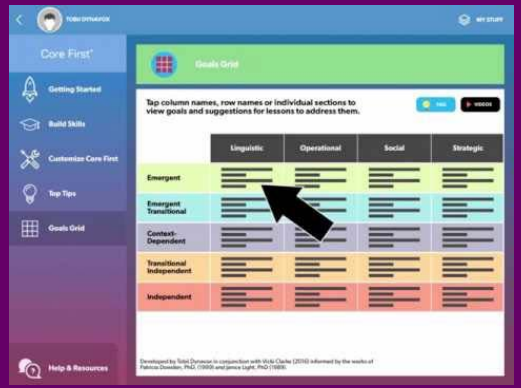
Summary

- Accept chaos
  - It won't always make sense
- Attribute meaning
- Be flexible
- MODEL ALL DAY

Please remember

- You can suck at using AAC devices
  - Anything you do, helps the student learn
- No symbol ever hurt someone
  - Just start somewhere!

Resources/References



Pathways for Core First

- Designed for Snap + Core First page set from Tobii Dynavox
  - BUT could be used with any core system
- "Build Skills" has pre-made core vocab lessons for the whole week
- "Goal Grid" can help you decide next target
  - And goals correspond to lessons

Resources/References

- PrAACtical AAC
  - Strategies for Aided Language
  - A Year of Core Words
- Project Core
- AssistiveWare Core Word Classroom
- DLMPD Professional Development Modules
- Pinterest
  - “Core Vocabulary”
  - “AAC Modeling”

Questions?

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