

- **What is AAC?**

AAC stands for Alternative Augmentative Communication. AAC is any method of communication that is not oral speech. It might mean sign language, picture cards, pressing buttons with preset messages, an iPad with a vocabulary program on it, typing, handwriting, or any other form of communication which uses symbols or words. If you use Facebook, write email, or point to things, you are already using AAC in your own life.

- **Is my child old enough for AAC?**

Yes.

There is no age threshold for communication. If your child is old enough to communicate, but has not developed speech, then they need AAC.

- **What skills does my child need before they can use AAC?**

The only requirement for AAC is the ability to move a single muscle. Your child does not have to understand speech, be communicating, pass an IQ test, be at a certain developmental level, or show any interest in or understanding of communication and language before starting to use AAC. With the help of a good speech therapist, they can learn these things as they go.

- **What about PECs?**

Many children start out using PECs as a communication system. PECs restricts a child's communication to nouns and asking for things. There is a lot more to say in the world. A complete AAC system will allow a child to say anything and combine words into original sentences.

- **Will AAC keep my child from speaking?**

No. AAC will help your child start communicating and practice using language meaningfully. Research shows that many children who start out using AAC go on to develop oral speech, and that AAC use helps speech development.

- **Should we use AAC outside therapy?**

Yes! AAC is communication. Communication is not restricted to therapy sessions or school days, but is something that happens all the time, everywhere. All children deserve a chance to communicate. The more practice your child gets with their AAC system, the better they will get at communicating.



April is Autism Acceptance Month. Acceptance is an action.