



Assistive Tech Quarterly

October

ISSUE #02

AAC Awareness Month



Tips for Getting Started in Your Classroom

October is AAC awareness month. AAC stands for augmentative and alternative communication. AAC is communicating through the use of sign language, picture symbols/boards, or using a device such as an iPad. Just because someone is nonverbal or has limited verbal ability doesn't mean they don't have something to say.

Remember...everyone deserves a voice!

1. Start small: Don't overwhelm you or your student. Pick a few core words to use during activities that occur often every day, like put or go.
2. Model, model, and model some more. Incorporate the use of AAC throughout the day-lessons, mealtimes, play time, etc..
3. Have Patience: Progress won't happen overnight. Think about how much exposure a baby gets to the spoken language before they start to babble. Having an AAC device modeled in speech for a few minutes each week is not going to be very effective. Building understanding of language and communication takes a lot of time and exposure.

Need help planning AAC activities?

These helpful sites have ideas, including pre-made core word lessons to get you started.

<https://praacticalaac.org/>

<https://aaclanguagelab.com/>

<https://coreword.assistiveware.com>

What are the benefits of using AAC?



Supports natural speech development and language learning



Increased independence



Decreased frustration and behaviors



Improved educational and social outcomes



Easily customized and personalized



More communication!

Upcoming Events

Virtual Learning Opportunities!

Digital Choice Boards
Oct. 28th or Dec. 4

iPad Accessibility & Apps
Nov. 4 or Dec. 15

Engaging All Learners
Part 1
November 10th

Engaging All Learners
Part 2
November 18th

In-Person Learning Opportunities!

Enhancing Learner Outcomes:
The Role of Visual Supports
11/06/25

Sign Up Today on ePDC!

Types of AAC

Unaided AAC

Does not require any external equipment or tools.

Aided AAC

Requires the use of equipment or tools in addition to the person's body.

Includes gestures, signs, Makaton, facial expressions, body language, vocalisations.

Low-tech AAC

Includes pictures, photos, objects, drawings, written words.

High-tech AAC

Includes iPad apps, computers, speech-generating devices.



Regional Local Assistive Technology Specialist

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To request RLATS services, please contact your ESE director or LATS for referral.



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ISSUE #01

BACK TO SCHOOL

AT & the IEP

Assistive technology is any item, device, or tool used by a person with a disability that enables them to do things they might otherwise not be able to do because of their disability.

All IEP teams are required to annually consider whether a student with a disability needs AT to access their education.

**What is consideration of AT?
Who evaluates the student?**

Consideration can start with just the teacher and student- using the SETT framework, trialing a tool, and taking data. It may include several members of the IEP team.

If the team decides that further assessment for AT is needed beyond consideration, typically for students with complex disabilities, an evaluation may be recommended.*

*Please refer to district policies and guidelines for formal evaluation timelines and procedures.

Use the SETT Framework to guide the process!

SETT & More | Joy Zabala Site



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**Who is the
STUDENT?**

- Strengths
- Needs

E

**What is the
Learning
ENVIRONMENT?**

- Room Layout
- Barriers
- Supports In Place

T

**What are the
TASKS for
learning?**

- Learning Goals
- Essential Skills
- Barriers

T

**What TOOLS are
currently being
used
or need to
be considered?**

Upcoming Events

Virtual Learning Opportunities!

**ESE 101: Understand in²g
Supports and Services**
09/2/25

**Using Google Tools to
Support Struggling Learners**
09/3/25

*Choose a day & time that
fits your schedule!*

2:00-3:00 CST
or
3:15-4:15 CST

In-Person Opportunities

**Accommodations: Assisting
Students with Disabilities**
09/09/25
8:00-3:00 CST

**Executive Functioning:
Supporting Students for
Lifelong Learning**
09/25/25
8:00 - 3:00 CST

Sign Up Today on ePDC!



For people without
disabilities, technology
makes things easier. For
people with disabilities,
technology makes things
possible.

ibm training manual 1991

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