

WHAT IS AUGMENTATIVE AND ALTERNATIVE COMMUNICATION (AAC)

Assistive Communication Clinic

What is Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC)?

- All the ways that an individual communicates besides talking.
- Strategies and tools used to solve communication challenges. These can include photos/symbols, gestures, signs, facial expressions, writing and speech generating devices.

Who is it for?

- Individuals who are not able to express all their thoughts and needs through speech.

Why should a person use an AAC system?

- For others to understand the individual's message.
- For the individual to have some control of their surroundings and their choices in life.
- To provide an effective method of communicating allowing meaningful participation in everyday life.

How can the Assistive Communication Clinic team help?

- We provide education on how to develop an individual's readiness skills for the use of augmentative communication.
- We provide assessment and consultation to determine an individual's communication needs and abilities.
- We provide alternative methods of communicating.
- We provide assistance to request funding for tools such as communication displays and speech generating devices.
- We provide initial training for the use of the communication tools with the individual, family, school and community partners.
- We help to monitor the individual's progress in communication, and adapt their communication method accordingly.

Will AAC stop or interfere with verbal speech development?

- Research shows that AAC use does not interfere with verbal speech development.
- AAC can have a positive effect on verbal speech and language development.
- Speech generating devices can provide a voice model for speech.
- Speech generating devices and communication books can enable a person to speak longer messages by combining words.