

Remove Barriers to Communication with AAC

The golden rule of being an AAC supporter is to just ask the AAC user.

Use this checklist to direct your own AAC support. You may check multiply boxes. If an AAC user cannot answer these questions, then complete it with them. Identify barriers to their communication, and decide who will remove them.

	I will do this myself	I want support to do this myself	I want someone else to do this	Check with me each time
Physical environment				
Finding a quiet place to talk	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Volume controls on my AAC: external speaker, settings to increase or decrease	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Transporting my AAC: carry strap or harness, wheel-chair mount, backpack	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Arranging my AAC within comfortable reach	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Keeping it charged: carrying a power cord or external charger, charging it overnight	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Advocacy				
Explaining to a stranger how I communicate	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Asking others to wait while I compose my message	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Asking others to also use AAC or type with me	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Protecting my boundaries: Do's and Don'ts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Telling others to talk to me, not about me	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Telling someone off for how they are speaking to me	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Social environment				
Choosing who to talk to	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Getting the attention of others	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Greeting others	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Responding to the greetings of others	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Setting the topic of conversation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Asking questions of others	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Replying to questions of others	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ending the conversation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Group environments				
Getting the attention of whoever is in charge	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Raising the volume to shout	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Reducing the volume to whisper	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Showing the message rather than broadcasting it with volume	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Making sure I have my turn to contribute to group discussions and conversations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Planned environments, like medical appointments				
Deciding what questions to ask	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Deciding what concerns or symptoms to share	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Deciding if my questions have all been answered	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sharing my decisions or answers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Clarifying my decisions or answers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Preparing “scripts” ahead of time, possibly with fill-in-the-blanks	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My AAC itself				
Sharing my contact information	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Selecting my digital voice	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Adding new words or phrases	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Selecting my back-up system	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Deciding which communication method (AAC, gestures, words, etc) to use, when	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Deciding to change my AAC system	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Deciding when to use my AAC system	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Deciding when not to use my AAC system	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Checking my message history	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

If an AAC user is still learning to answer these questions, consider support strategies or educational goals that teach them to direct their AAC support over time.

For more information: www.assistiveware.com/aac-supporter