

AAC finders checklist

Do you know someone who has difficulties communicating? Perhaps they would benefit from AAC. Talk to them to discuss their communication skills and needs.

Communication systems, strategies and tools that replace or supplement natural speech are known as augmentative and alternative communication (AAC). AAC helps people meet basic needs and participate in the world around them. Early referral and support for AAC ensures the best outcomes.

AAC will not stop speech use. AAC is not the last resort. AAC can be used alongside existing communication. Use this checklist to determine if the person you know/support would benefit from AAC.

Current communication skills

1. Describe how the person currently communicates:

2. How often do people around them *understand* their communication?

People	Mostly	Sometimes	Rarely	N/A
Intimate partners or close family members	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Familiar caregivers, nursing staff, or disability support staff	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Physicians, therapists, or other professionals	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Unfamiliar new staff	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Friends in a familiar quiet environment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Friends in a noisy public environment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Unfamiliar people in a new setting or context	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

3. Describe what strategies the person currently uses when they are not understood. What do they do? What do they add to get their message across?

4. List the environments where the person can currently communicate comfortably, effectively and independently:

5. Here is a list of just some reasons we may communicate. Can they communicate these things?

Reason to communicate	Yes	Sometimes	No
Make a basic choice or request	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Order food in a restaurant	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Select the clothes they want to wear	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ask for help or direct how they want to be helped	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Reject something they don't want or like	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Make a comment about something they have seen or heard	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
List people they miss and want to visit or hear from	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Express how they are feeling	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Describe what is frustrating or irritating them	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Describe the nature of a pain they are experiencing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Indicate where they feel pain or discomfort	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Request information about their own medical status and health needs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ask about people who have passed away or that they knew in the past	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Share their plans for the weekend with an acquaintance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Describe a memory or past experience	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tell what they think about a movie they watched	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Relay advice and concerns to others	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Greet others	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Contact a friend and initiate a conversation or make plans	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Participate in a conversation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Introduce themselves to a stranger	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tell a joke	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Choose between options of where to live or what treatment to pursue	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Communicate effectively when stressed or anxious	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Interact with colleagues or classmates at work, school	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Participate in group meetings and discussions, at work, school or community	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ask a stranger for directions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Review your responses to all of these questions. When possible, compare this checklist to the person's own self-assessment from "Should I try AAC?" If the person has limited ways they can meet their communication needs across different environments with different people, then they would likely benefit from some form of AAC. Referral to a local support service or Speech Pathologist is indicated.

For more information: www.assistiveware.com/finders-checklist