

## Aided Language Stimulation or AAC Modeling



There are several steps that have to happen *before* an individual is expected to use a communication device or overlay expressively.

### What is it?

Aided language stimulation is receptive language training: a facilitation technique in which the facilitator highlights symbols on the augmented speaker's overlay as the facilitator interacts and communicates in the context of an activity. In other words, the facilitator models the use of a communication overlay before the augmentative speaker is expected to use it. The facilitator can choose to highlight and activate the device or activate the device and verbalize the word at the same time. Aided language stimulation allows the individual to visually process words and symbols being concretely combined to form functional utterances within meaningful routines, while simultaneously increasing the facilitator's familiarity with the vocabulary on the device.

### Why is it used?

This modeling process demonstrates to the individual using AAC how to use their system for functional communication. Individuals develop and enhance their language partly due to watching and learning from more advanced language users. Individuals using AAC are often at a disadvantage as they do not have consistent models of AAC use. Aided language stimulation provides examples of language in the same or similar mode that is expected of the AAC user.

### How is it used?

1. Use primarily single words (symbols) and short grammatically correct phrases (symbol phrases) to talk about what the child is hearing, seeing, doing, and feeling.
2. Speak slowly, inserting numerous pauses into the conversational flow.
3. Use lots of repetition as you describe ongoing events.
4. Whenever the child indicates something nonverbally, provide the child with the single word (symbol) needed to communicate the exact same intent.
5. Whenever the child indicates something with a single word (symbol), expand that message into a semantically equivalent two-word (symbol) combination.
6. Use the device as the student access the device, i.e. direct selection, switches.
7. Can be used with paper-based boards as well as dynamic display devices.

### When and where is it used?

Aided language stimulation should be used whenever possible. It is essential that individuals get models of successful and effective AAC use to help them advance their own skills. If aided language stimulation is used all the time and in every environment there should be an increase in the rate of progress of the individual's AAC use as well as generalization of his or her skills. Both adults and children can utilize aided language stimulation.