

## CREATING OPPORTUNITIES

In order to be able to communicate effectively using AAC, we need to have opportunities to do so. There is a lot that we can do to create opportunities for communication. The questions we ask, the statements we make, the language we use, and the ways in which we organize and arrange the environment can create opportunities for communication. Technically:

*Creating opportunities for communication refers to how we set-up the environment and/or interact with an item of interest to encourage an individual to use AAC.*

### **Communicative Function:** Requesting a preferred item

Asking for something we want, or need is a common communicative function. We can support an individual's use of AAC and create an opportunity to request by adjusting the environment. For example, we could have multiple items available and ask which they want. Or, we could also have an item out of reach so that the individual needs to communicate in order to get the item.



### **Communicative Function:** Directing another's actions

Asking someone to do something, also known as directing another's action, is another important communicative function. It is a communicative function that empowers individuals to have a little more control over their environment. We can use an item and have the individual tell us what to do with it, or we can adjust an activity so that the individual tells us how to act.



### **Communicative Function:** Requesting help

Being able to ask for help is a critical skill that should be practiced. We can create an obstacle that requires an individual to ask for help to be able to get it (i.e., putting something out of reach or putting it in a container). This may feel unfair, but again we need to create safe opportunities where an individual can practice asking for help.



### **Communicative Function:** Commenting

Being able to comment is an important way of being able to be "in the moment." We help this by commenting ourselves (using AAC whenever possible) and responding to how the individual is communicating. Commenting is different from requesting, directing, or expecting a response from the individual.

