

MODEL LANGUAGE ON THE AAC DEVICE

- Consistently use AAC during classroom lessons and activities.
- Model language without any expectations. The student will use the AAC device when they are ready.

FOSTER A SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT

- Ask open-ended questions and give them time to respond.
- Your student has valuable ideas and thoughts to share. Be patient and wait for them to respond.
- Ensure that ALL of their devices are charged and working each day.

PRESUME COMPETENCE

- Treat all forms of communication with respect, whether they come from speech, gestures, or an AAC device.
- Respect all attempts to communicate; encourage all forms of advocacy!

RESOURCES

Website Links:
Scan the QR Code
below for a list of
websites and
resources!



Need more support?
Contact Dani Splading:
dasp1432@colorado.edu



A quick guide to supporting AAC users with hearing related needs



DANI SPALDING, MS ED.DHH, TAMMY
FREDRISKSON, PHD, CCC-A
NATIONAL EARLY HEARING
DETECTION AND INTERVENTION
ANNUAL CONFERENCE
JACKSONVILLE, FL | MARCH
2026

WHY INCLUDE HEARING TECHNOLOGY?

PERSONALIZATION

AAC devices are an individual's voice that is uniquely theirs. If we want them to communicate their wants and needs, we need to include all assistive technologies the individual uses.

AGENCY

To encourage agency and autonomy, AAC users have the right to advocate for themselves. This includes advocating for the use of their hearing related needs and devices.

ACCESS

To ensure accessibility for all individuals, especially those with different hearing levels and assistive technology, they must have the language and capability to communicate their ability to access the environment.

COMPLEX COMMUNICATION NEEDS

Findings suggest that aided AAC devices can be successful components of communication interventions for individuals who have hearing loss and experience additional or concomitant disabilities.

BOARD IDEAS:

GENERAL

Ready?	no	yes	I	Need	Hearing Aid
It's not working	It's working	Help me	Want	Can	Cochlear Implant
Put on	Take Off	All done	Don't	Can't	Microphone
What did you say?	Too Loud	Break	Hear	A	Hearing Test

AUDIOLOGICAL APPOINTMENT

hear it	I can't hear it	I'm ready	I'm not ready	What?	Okay
yes	No	Too Loud	Quiet	I need a break	Ouch

Ah	oo	ee	Sh	sss	Mmm
Football	baseball	Hotdog	cupcake	Cowboy	Flashlight

DEVICE SPECIFIC

Hearing Aid	Yes	No	1 One	2 Both	Help me
a new battery	Is working	Is not working	A Break	Need	Fix my
Headband	it's too tight				

IMPLEMENTING

Implementation can be done in 2 phases: Core and Fringe vocabulary. Doing so allows the student and their communicative partners to be more successful with the new vocabulary.

PHASE 1: (CORE)

FOLDER:

- Ear/Hearing Aid/Cochlear Implant

ICONS WITHIN FOLDER:

- yes, no, working, not working, I, need, want, microphone, I can, I can't, hear, too loud, too quiet, a break, ready, not ready, hearing aid/cochlear implant, take off, put on, all done...



PHASE 2: (FRINGE)

EMBEDDED FOLDERS:

- Hearing test -> LING sounds, Spondees, affirmative/negative/questioning responses, break request loudness, etc...

ICONS:

- LING sounds
 - ah (airplane), oo (ghost), ee (mouse), sh (sleeping), s (snake), mm (cookie)
- Spondees:
 - baseball, hotdog, icecream, cowboy, airplane, flashlight



IMPORTANT NOTES

- When selecting pictures for icons/folders, use ones that people will recognize or already use (thumbs up for yes).
- You may have to record your own voice for the LING sounds to play back correctly.

