

Augmentative and Alternative Communication

You may have heard the word AAC when talking about individuals who have difficulty with spoken language. But what does it mean? AAC stands for augmentative and alternative communication. In simpler terms, it means all the ways we communicate without speaking. Some people use AAC for augmentative reasons because their speech may be hard to understand. Other people use AAC for alternative reasons because they do not speak or can only say very few words.

There are 3 different types of AAC *no tech*, *low tech*, and *high tech*.



NO TECH

For no tech AAC, you only need your body to communicate. Examples include nodding/shaking your head, waving, thumbs up/down, or sign language.



LOW TECH

For low tech AAC, you need material, but it doesn't say anything when you use it. Examples include PECS, communication books, or writing your message.



HIGH TECH

For high tech AAC, you will use a system that is electronic, such as an iPad or a speech generating device. These systems use communication applications, such as Proloquo2Go, LAMP, or TouchChat.

This resource was created in collaboration with the Functional Communication Clinic at Penn State Health.