

4 Simple Ways to Model AAC at Home

Empower Your Child's Communication Every Day.

What Is AAC?

AAC stands for **augmentative and alternative communication**. It includes any tool that helps a person communicate besides speaking, from picture cards and sign language to tablets and speech-generating devices. AAC supports speech; it does not replace it. Children learn to use AAC the same way they learn to talk: by seeing and hearing the people around them use it every day.

4 Simple Ways to Model AAC at Home

Empower Your Child's Communication Every Day.

1

Model, Model, Model

Point to icons on the device while speaking to show how it's used.

2

Keep It Accessible

Ensure the device is always within reach during play and mealtime.

3

Expand Beyond Requests

Model comments, emotions, and questions—not just asking for things!

4

Wait & Give Time

Pause and give 5–10 seconds for your child to process and respond.

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A Day with AAC

- **Breakfast:** Keep the device on the table. As you pour cereal, tap “more” and say “More cereal!” Then model a comment: “Yummy!” or “All done.”
- **Play time:** Build a block tower together. Tap “up” as it grows, “uh oh” when it falls, and “again” to start over. Pause and wait to see if your child taps a word too.
- **Bedtime:** Use the device to talk about the day or a favorite book: “happy,” “tired,” “read,” “night night.” Keep it simple and fun; there is no need to test or quiz.

How GentleCare Applies It

Our team models AAC throughout sessions, during play, snack, and daily routines, so your child sees how their system works in real moments. We also coach parents and caregivers on easy ways to model at home and help keep the device ready and within reach. Every child's plan is individualized, and we celebrate every new word, button press, and gesture along the way.

Frequently Asked Questions

Will using AAC stop my child from talking?

Research generally shows AAC does not prevent speech and can support it.

What does it mean to model AAC?

Using the device yourself while you talk, so your child sees how it works.

How long should I wait for my child to respond?

The handout suggests 5–10 seconds. Many children need extra time to notice what you said, plan a response, and find the right button or sign. Waiting quietly, without repeating yourself right away, gives them that time and shows that their turn matters.

Helpful links: [Our ABA therapy services](#) · [Navigating AAC: Where Do We Start?](#) · [Handout: Communication Functions](#)

Want help getting started with AAC at home? GentleCare Therapy works with families in Gibbsboro, Camden County, and South Jersey. [Reach out to our team today.](#)

Call (856) 484-5535 or visit gentlecaretherapy.com/contact-us

This handout is general education and does not replace advice from your child's care team.