



50 PrAACtical Things to Do In Celebration of AAC Awareness Month



Learn, Connect, Make, Educate, Do

Learn

1. Learn something prAACtically new. Participate in a webinar, view a recorded session online, read a journal article, check out some new assessment instruments, explore an SGD that is new to you, or investigate a new AAC app.
2. Challenge yourself to develop a new technical skill with whatever AT is most accessible to you.
3. Explore a new web-based tool that supports your AAC work.
4. See what AAC-related trainings are in your area and register for one.
5. Check out an AAC assessment tool that you haven't yet used.
6. Investigate voice banking & message banking so that you can explain them to people who are losing their natural speech & help guide them through the process.
7. Go to a vendor website of an SGD or AAC app that is of interest to you. Go through some of their training materials and/or videos.
8. Identify emerging trends in education or healthcare and give some thought as to how to prepare your AAC practice for these upcoming changes.
9. Educate yourself about helping your AAC clients/families prepare themselves & their AT for emergencies. Helpful resources [here](#).
10. Figure out more about the accessibility options built into the operating systems of the computers and mobile technologies you use.

Connect

11. Expand your professional learning network through social media. Connect with professionals who have similar interests on Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, or Google+.
12. Consider mentoring someone else, such as a young professional, graduate student, person who uses AAC, or family member. Re-connect with a person who uses AAC with whom you've lost contact.
13. Follow #augcomm, #assistivetech, and/or #AAC on Twitter. Contribute your own ideas or Retweet something you found helpful.
14. Listen to the perspectives of people who use AAC and/or their families by exploring new blogs.
15. Thank someone who has had a positive impact on your own AAC journey.
16. Read up on copyright & fair use practices to be sure that you're using images fairly.

17. Reach out to a group home to see if they need some extra communication support for their residents or training for their staff.
18. Identify someone who knows more than you in a particular area and consider contacting them about the possibility of a mentoring relationship
19. Talk with a high school guidance counselor or job coach about setting up a program to train students who need to learn computer skills to make visual supports for people with AAC needs.

Make

20. Help someone with communication difficulties prepare a communication aid, like [this one](#), for emergencies.
21. Make extra copies of generic AAC supports that you've created and share with someone in need. It could be another professional, a family or person who uses AAC, or an agency (such as a group home or support group).
22. Adapt an assessment tool, game, or therapy material for AAC use.
23. Develop a mini-schedule for getting a haircut and share it with salons in your area.
24. Download a communication passport, [like this one](#), and complete it with someone who uses AAC to help others understand more about their needs and abilities.
25. Make a communication board for talking about events from the 40's and 50's and take it with you to visit with some residents of a local skilled nursing facility.
26. Adapt a book and donate it to your local school, group home, or library.
27. Develop a resource packet for people who believe that the use of AAC will hinder speech and language development.
28. Create a social story about going to the doctor or dentist and share it with practices in your area that serve people with special needs.
29. Make a back-up communication aid for someone who uses technology to communicate.
30. Develop a picture card ring showing places in your community and offer it to a family who would find it useful.

Educate

31. Volunteer to talk about AAC at a local senior center, library, place of worship, or community organization.
32. Contact a local college or university and volunteer to talk to a class about your AAC experiences.
33. Host an AAC make-and-take for a scouting organization or homeschooling group. Make page puffers, adapt battery toys for switches, etc.

34. Contact an appropriate support group and offer to serve as a resource for people with questions about AAC.
35. Share information about phone access, speech-to-speech relay, and adapted phone equipment with an individual or group who would benefit from that.
36. Offer to teach volunteers to make communication supports and connect them with families and teachers in need.
37. Contact some first responders, like police & firefighters. Offer to talk to them about the unique needs of people who use AAC. Share resources like the ones [here](#).
38. Show someone how to use social media, like Facebook groups or Twitter, to support their AAC learning.

Do

39. Collect used cell phones and donate to an organization which recycles them for the benefit of individuals with disabilities.
40. Speak up in support of people with AAC needs, access to quality services, and inclusive practices.
41. Arrange to provide special needs childcare help for a support group or AAC training in your area.
42. Stay healthy. Give your AT a thorough cleaning. Check to be sure you have a good system for keeping germs at bay.
43. Contact a hospital or clinic in your area and share resources on communication supports, such as [these](#) and [these](#).
44. Join a sharing or exchange site for an SGD, app, or AAC program that you use. Contribute an ideas or material that you created.
45. Organize and host an AAC vendor training in your area.
46. Grab a communication aid and use it to have a conversation with someone. If you're really feeling brave, try alternative access such as eye gaze, scanning with an AAC device, or partner-directed scanning.
47. Reflect on your AAC practices to see how far you have come and identify some future AAC-related goals.
48. Check your AAC stash to see if there are things that you are no longer using and offer them to someone else.
49. Talk to a business that could be a potential employer or volunteer site for people who use AAC and are learning job skills or seeking employment.
50. Appreciate yourself for doing good work. What you do matters. Every day.