

# Pushing Into the Preschool Classroom to Support Young Learners Who are Nonverbal or Minimally Verbal

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## Disclosures & Acknowledgements

**Kim**

Financial: Employee of Saltillo Corporation

Non-financial: ASHA member, SIG 12

**Carole**

Financial: Co-author/editor

Non-financial: Owner of educational blog (PrAACtical AAC)

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- AAC families & graduate students at Nova Southeastern University
- MELD Project teachers, SLPs, & families
- Vicki Clarke & the teachers, therapists, & families in NWGA Preschool AAC Project

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## Plan for this Session

**Kim**

- Nature and characteristics of young AAC learners at the emergent and context-dependent levels
- Using supportive interaction styles

**Carole**

- Supporting AAC use in lessons, activities, and routines
- Accessing free/low cost AAC materials

Lesson Pix

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CHARACTERISTICS OF  
YOUNG AAC LEARNERS

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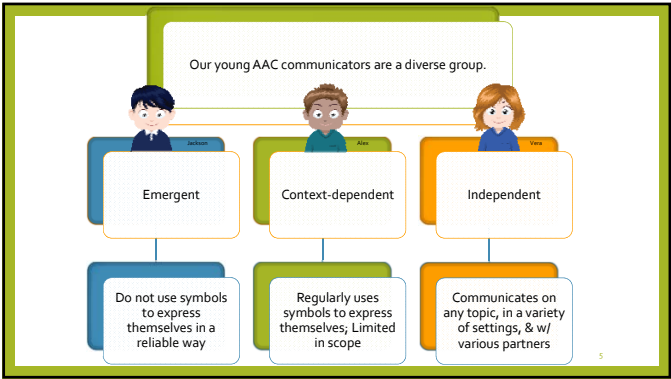
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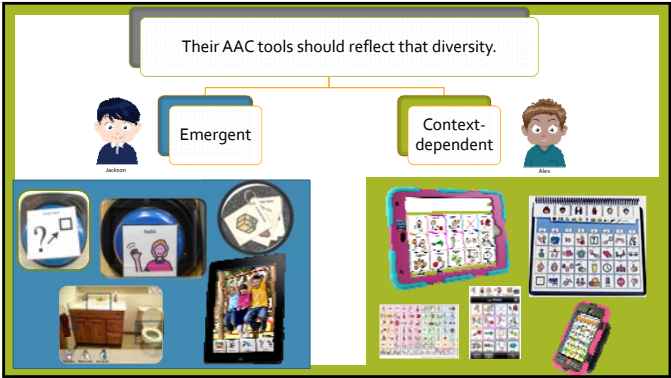
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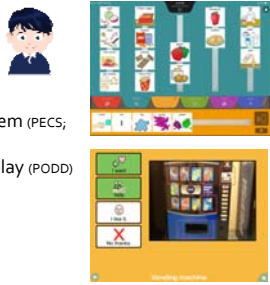
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### AAC Options for the Emergent Communicator

- Non-symbolic interactions
- Idiosyncratic gestures
- Key word signing
- Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS;  
‘No tech’ or app)
- Pragmatically Organized Dynamic Display (PODD)
- SGDs or AAC apps with:
  - Grid displays
  - Visual Scene Displays



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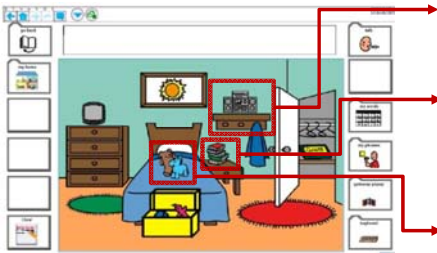
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### Visual Scenes (hybrid)



*I want to sing.*

*Let's read a book.*

*Kiss friends good-night.*

[www.slideshare.net/Specos/visual-scenes](http://www.slideshare.net/Specos/visual-scenes)

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### AAC Options for the Context-dependent Communicator

(Too many to list!)



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Strategies

AAC

Materials

Activities

Supporting AAC Use in the Classroom

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AAC near me

Focus on partner learning

Interaction skills (AAC Facilitation Skills)

- Aided language input (AAC modeling)
- Creating frequent opportunities for expression
- Sufficient pause time
- "Be the fun" (Engaging tone)
- Descriptive talking (Non-confrontational style)
- Informative feedback

Individualized AAC systems

- Based on child strengths, needs, and priorities
- AAC is not a one-size-fits-all venture.

Supportive Strategies

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AAC NEAR ME

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FOCUS ON  
PARTNER  
LEARNING

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Focus  
on  
Partners

Listen

Start Small

Show Rather than Tell

Develop Materials for Partners

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Have you seen my cat ?  
Eric Carle

Image: amazon.com

have

you

see

my

is

not

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Sallilo

96 Locations Based on WordPower™60 Basic

what	when	where	ABC 123	PEOPLE	QUESTN	ACTIONS	SOCIAL	PLACES	TIME	GROUPS	DESCR
I	me	how	who	why	again	please	thank you	now	bad	good	
am	to	be	feel	give	listen	happy	sad	tired	okay	cool	
it	is	are	will	come	hurt	hear	know	that	a	the	and more
you	can	eat	drink	finish	get	love	make	need	all	at	some
your	do	go	help	open	put	say/think	new/think	first	then	for	on
here	have	like	play	read	stop	walk	show	in	up	off	
yes	no	want	take	tell	turn	watch	wear	work	out	down	with

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AAC  
FACILITATION  
SKILLS

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Engage the child in fun, meaningful interactions

- Follow child's lead
- Turn-taking – songs, games, play with toys
- Imitation – mirror child's play and sounds
- Establishing joint attention – use gestures and pointing to comment, draw attention
- Take focus off of talking



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Teach AAC Facilitation Skills

- Aided language input (AAC modeling)
- Creating frequent opportunities for expression
- Sufficient pause time
- “Be the fun” (Engaging tone)
- Descriptive talking (Non-directive style)
- Informative feedback

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Erin using Aided Language Input - Free Play

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Model & Teach Pause and Wait

Each time you make a comment or ask a child a question:

- Look at the child expectantly.
- Pause and give the child the opportunity to communicate.
- Wait at least 5-10 seconds.

Why?

- ✓ Indicates that the child is expected to communicate
- ✓ Provides additional time for the child to understand what is said and/or formulate a message

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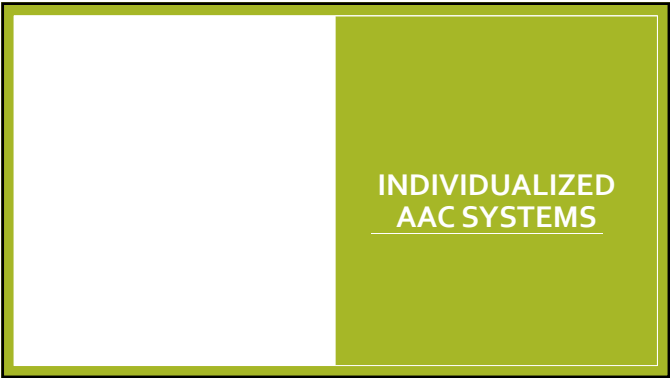
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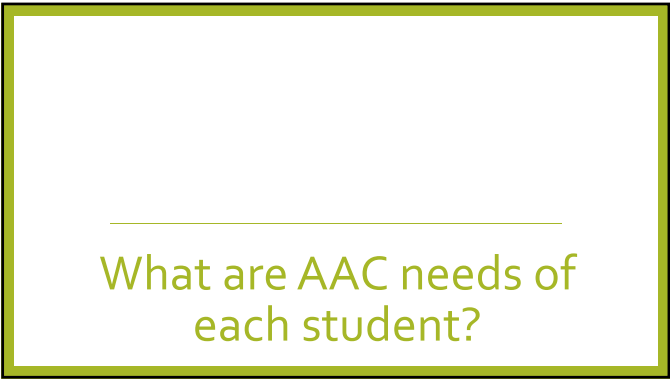
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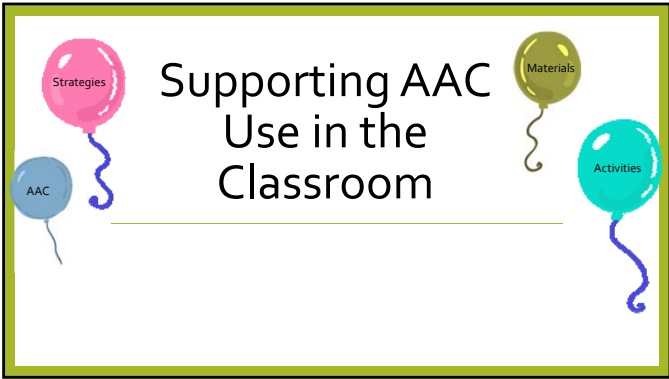
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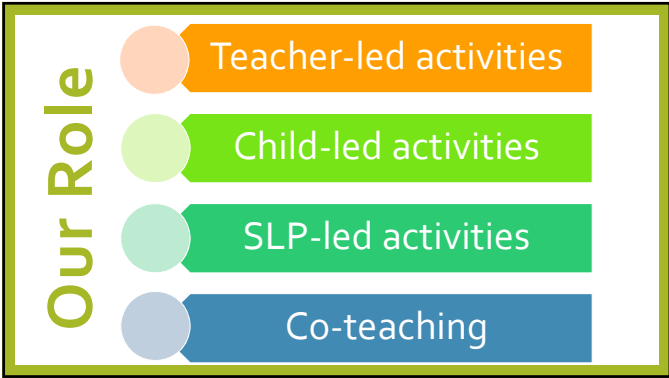
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Goals	Activities								
	Arrival	Morning Mtg	Centers	Lang Arts	Specials	Lunch	Reading	Math	Centers
Greet	X				X	X			
Make choices to set schedule	X		X						X
Request objects/actions		X		X	X	X			
Request help					X		X	X	
Comment		X		X				X	X
Give directions		X	X	X		X			
Answer peer questions	X				X			X	
Turn-taking w/ peer			X				X		X
Sequence personal narrative		X					X		
Use core words to answer WH question				X			X		X

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Goals	Activities								
	Arrival	Morning Mtg	Centers	Lang Arts	Specials	Lunch	Reading	Math	Centers
Greet	X				X	X			
Make choices to set schedule	X		X						X
Request objects/actions		X		X	X	X			
Request help					X		X	X	
Comment		X		X				X	X
Give directions		X	X	X		X			
Answer peer questions	X				X			X	
Turn-taking w/ peer			X				X		X
Sequence personal narrative		X					X		
Use core words to answer WH question				X			X		X

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Goals	Activities								
	Arrival	Morning Mtg	Centers	Lang Arts	Specials	Lunch	Reading	Math	Centers
Greet	X		X		X	X			X
Make choices to set schedule	X		X						
Request objects/actions		X		X	X	X			
Request help					X		X	X	
Comment		X		X				X	X
Give directions		X	X	X		X			
Answer peer questions	X				X			X	
Turn-taking w/ peer			X				X		X
Sequence personal narrative		X					X		
Use core words to answer WH question				X			X		X

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Sample Activity-Objective Matrix

(Primary + Generalization)

Name: Neicy

Date: Jan 14

Goals	Activities								
	Arrival	Morning Mtg	Centers	Lang Arts	Specials	Lunch	Reading	Math	Centers
Greet w/ SDO	P				G				
Ask partner-focused question	G		G			P			
3-5 word sentences			P	G	G			G	
Answer story-related questions				G			P		
Identify meaning of tier 2 words				P					G
Use 'not' stay on topic	G	G	P	G		G	G		P

P: Primary time for teaching/practice; G: Planned opportunity for generalization practice

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Activity-Objective Matrix: Therapy Session

Name:

Date:

Goals	Activities							
Expressive								
Receptive								
Literacy								

<http://bit.ly/1eD596Q>

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“Who has time for this?!”

“Do I really have to do this kind of planning?”

•It depends.

•Is the student making sufficient progress?

•Are you satisfied with the collaboration process?



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### Child-led Activities

- Generally unstructured
- Great for reluctant communicators & children who struggle with joint attention & engagement
- Follow the child's lead with parallel play, self-talk, think aloud, aided language input, descriptive talking
- Minimal demands at first, Gradually introduce reciprocal interaction
  - EARLY ON: Offer things they like
  - LATER: Controlled access



Lesson Pix

Observe  
Imitate  
Intrude  
(Hanen)



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### SLP-led Activities

#### Advantages

- Gives the SLP more control to design the activities
  - Aligned with student goals
- Activity Routines: Can add structure and predictability that promote student participation and engagement
- Develop a nucleus of activities and grow the materials over time
- SLP becomes increasingly comfortable and can focus more on instructional strategies

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### Developing Activity Routines

- High level of predictability
- Balance SLP-led activities with student choice & autonomy
- Clear beginning/end
- Planned opportunities for AAC use
- Visual supports (e.g., Activity Routine Schedule; Mini-schedule for some activities within the routine)
- Start with a simple version, gradually add increase task difficulty
- Build a 'template' that works for YOU & your kids



Activity Routine Options

Image Credit: M. Brisch

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### Activity Routine Elements

1. Try to start & end the same way each time
2. Active participation for all students throughout
3. Engaging materials & interaction style
4. Use the magic of movement & music
5. Clear targets (E.g., Joint attention, requesting, pre-stored messages, core vocabulary, 2-word utterances)
6. Be prepared to model AAC
7. Pre-planned elicitations



Lesson Pix

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### Routine: Free Play Pals

- Puppet Pals Hello
- Toy choices
  - Pre-set: Follow the routine
  - Student-led: Child chooses toys
- Puppet Pals Goodbye



Lesson Pix

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### Puppet Pals Hello/Goodbye

Hello \_\_\_\_.

Hello \_\_\_\_.

Hello \_\_\_\_.

It's time to say hello.


Goodbye \_\_\_\_.

Goodbye \_\_\_\_.

Goodbye \_\_\_\_.

It's time to say goodbye.

- Simple song structure
- Active involvement by students
  - Choose who to sing to
  - Slow the rate
  - Pause to elicit AAC use



Lesson Pix

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### Routine: Surprise Bag (Dress-up)

1. 'What's in the bag?' Song
2. Choose an item
  - Label it; Talk about it
  - Pick someone to put it on
  - Talk about it some more
3. Repeat Steps 1-2
4. Ending song



Lesson Pix

What's in the bag?  
What's in the bag?  
Do you know?  
Do you know?  
What's in the bag?

What's in the bag?  
What's in the bag?  
Now I know.  
Now I know,  
What's in the bag.

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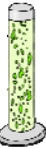
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### Routine: Surprise Bag (Cause & Effect Toys)

1. 'What's in the bag?' Song
2. Choose an item
  - Label it; Talk about it
  - Light it up, make music
  - Talk about it some more
3. Repeat Steps 1-2
4. Ending song



Lesson Pix

What's in the bag?  
What's in the bag?  
Do you know?  
Do you know?  
What's in the bag?

What's in the bag?  
What's in the bag?  
Now I know.  
Now I know,  
What's in the bag.

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### Book Talk

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### Book Talk Group

#### Activity Sequence

- Pre-reading activity
  - Book of the Week
  - Highlight key words &/or language targets
- Reading or picture walk
- Alphabet activity
- Writing activity



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- Mixed ability classroom w/ 4 students who use AAC
- Pushes in 4 days/week for a total of 1 hr 40 min
- 2 groups of 2 students

Monday

10:20-10:50  
Free Play Pals w/ Olivia & Jesse

Tuesday

9:00-9:20  
Book Talk Group w/ Eli & Shavonne

Wednesday

10:20-10:50  
Mystery Bag w/ Olivia & Jesse

Thursday

9:00-9:20  
Book Talk Group w/ Eli & Shavonne

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“Where can I go for free or low-cost AAC therapy materials?”



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### Selected AAC Vendors

- AssistiveWare’s Core Word Classroom  
<http://bit.ly/2DlaSVI>







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### Selected AAC Vendors

- PRC's AAC Language Lab (subscription): <https://aaclanguelab.com/>
- Free resources: <http://bit.ly/2JDmKIR>



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### Selected AAC Vendors

- Saltillo
- Chat Editor (Windows only): <http://bit.ly/2JBgKgB>
- Videos & downloadable materials: <http://bit.ly/2xemYbS>



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### Selected AAC Vendors

- Speak for Yourself: <http://bit.ly/2JC4g5h>



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### Selected AAC Vendors

- Tobii-Dynavox
  - My Tobii Dynavox Resources for Professionals: <http://bit.ly/2DhEbs1>
  - PageSet Central: <http://bit.ly/2DkTIHA>
  - Pathways: <http://bit.ly/2JHuDqF>



#### The Dynamic AAC Goals Grid 2

DAGG-2



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### Other

- Project Core: <http://bit.ly/2t5mByT>



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### Tar Heel Reader

(<https://tarheelreader.org/>)

- Books created by teachers, SLPs, parents, etc.
- Download as PPT or PDF
- Read online
  - Choice of 3 voices
  - Switch-accessible
- Create a free account to store favorites



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“Our staff/families need training.”

“Where can I get AAC  
training materials?”

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AAC-related Training Materials

Video-based

- Angelman Syndrome Foundation Communication Training Series: <http://bit.ly/2JDA9dF>
- Assistive Technology Internet Modules (must create a free account first): <http://bit.ly/2JChkHE>
- PaTTAN Power AAC: <http://bit.ly/2JzRzrz>
- Project Core: <http://bit.ly/2DlwcKa>

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Staff Development: AAC Facilitation Skills

Materials for Your Training

- AAC Basics: <http://bit.ly/1JBc23>
  - 3 Modules: Power of Communication, Core Vocabulary, Natural Aided Language
- Ideas: Hands-on activities  
<http://bit.ly/2fJoqQj>



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More Materials for Your Training

•MASTER PAL Series:  
[bit.ly/MASTERPAL](http://bit.ly/MASTERPAL)  
AAC

- 11 Modules on AAC facilitation strategies
- Each one includes downloadable slides, handouts, video links, talking points, etc.



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THANK YOU!

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