

Ideas for Encouraging & Supporting AAC Users

OOPS...

I was trying to get you to say what **I** want you to say, **NOT** what **YOU** want to say!"



YES!

"Blue is my favorite! I wonder what color **YOU** like!"
(Then... **Pause**!)



Instead of

saying things like...

"What is this?"

"Find ball."
"Touch all done."
"Push go."

"Tell me you're tired."
"Ask for a a cookie."


"Say I want iPad."

Can we really know what someone is thinking, feeling, or wanting? NOPE!

"No, that's not a dog. That's a cat. Say cat."

"We're not talking about McDonald's.
I asked if you want more bubbles."

"You can have a drink
when you say drink."

Prompts & responses like these can **discourage** communication because they may feel like a test, an instruction, a demand, or a correction. 

Try

using phrases like...

"I SEE you yawning, **maybe** you're TIRED."

"I HEAR your TUMMY rumbling!
I'm thinking you might be HUNGRY!"

"I love to EAT COOKIES!
I wonder what SNACK **YOU LOVE** to EAT!"

"I think this game is BORING!
I'm curious what **YOU** think of this GAME."

"I saw you PUSH my hand AWAY.  **TEACH** the language of self-advocacy!
Maybe you wanted to tell me Do NOT TOUCH!"

Make sure you use the AAC system to point out key words **while** using inviting language.

Then... **Pause** to allow time to process & respond.

Suggested words to model with AAC are shown above in CAPS.



Phrases like these allow you to **model for & encourage** AAC users **WITHOUT** suggesting that you think you can read their mind.

Everyone needs communication autonomy. It can really helpful to check yourself by asking, "Am I trying to encourage them to say what I want them to say or what *they* want to say?"

Encouraging phrase suggestions from Dr. Caroline Musselwhite



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