Child Development Programs
TOGETHER TOWARDS TOMORROW

Oak Valley Health

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AAC Definitions

Augmentative & Alternative Communication (AAC) — any tool or system that is used to improve a person's ability to communicate. This can include using a Speech Generating Device (SGD), pointing to pictures in a communication system, using eye gaze to look at a preferred item or picture, facial expressions, vocalizations, natural gestures, or sign language.

- **A**ugment - to enhance or improve
- **A**lternative - another way or means
- **C**ommunication - the sending and receiving of messages

No Tech or Unaided Communication — uses only the body, therefore can include voice, facial expressions, gestures, eye gaze, and body language

Low Tech or Aided Communication — includes use of a picture board, pen and paper, or an early Speech Generating Device (typically battery-powered)

High Tech Communication — involves the use of an electronic device (e.g. computer or tablet), typically with a dynamic (changing) display that uses words and/or symbols

Picture Communication Symbols (PCS) — a set of picture symbols that a person may point to, reach for, or use eye gaze to select. People commonly refer to these symbols as "pictures"

Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) — a very structured program that teaches children to physically exchange picture symbols for desired items or actions. This system is often introduced to children who are demonstrating difficulties with social communication

Visuals for Organization and Behaviour Management — picture symbols, photographs, or line drawings used to improve organization and increase a person's understanding of expectations and/or routines. Some examples include: picture/object schedules, first/then boards, social stories, and token reinforcement boards

Aided Language Stimulation — refers to a teaching strategy in which communication partners 'show as they go'. An adult models use of a child's communication system by pointing to pictures in that system as he/she is talking. This may also be referred to as Aided Language Input.