

Modeling

Modeling is an evidence-based strategy used to support a user's language development while using AAC. It involves a communication partner using the device themselves, **without the expectation the user will copy them**. This lets the user see and hear how communication works in real-life situations. Just as children learn spoken language by listening before they begin to talk, AAC users need opportunities to observe others using their system. By consistently using the device during natural interactions, you give users exposure to the language they're learning to express, building understanding and confidence over time.

Modeling Do's and Don'ts



What I should be doing

- Use the user's AAC device yourself to communicate, it shows them how they can use it too.
- Point to words as you speak. Activate go on their device when you say "Let's go."
- Keep language simple and natural. You don't have to model every word you say.
- Use it during real activities, toy play, snack time, even the bathroom are all great options.
- Acknowledge all forms of communication. If they reach or gesture, honor it, then model how to say it with AAC.



What I should NOT be doing

- ✗ Don't make the user copy you, it can make AAC feel like an aversive work task.
- ✗ Don't quiz them. AAC is for self-generated messages; "What is this?" or "Say it!" may not be what they wanted to say.
- ✗ Don't require the device before giving something, it can make AAC a nonpreferred activity.
- ✗ Don't worry about being perfect.
Any modeling is better than none!



Check out our
Modeling Video