

Five Key Areas to Focus on During AAC Data Collection

Whether you are early in the data collection process or monitoring a user's ongoing progress, it is important to track the fundamentals. Focusing on the following five areas can help provide a comprehensive picture of growth and guide future intervention.

01 Accept All Forms of Communication

Total communication includes vocalizations, verbal language, gestures, body language, and the use of AAC systems. Tracking communication across all modalities provides a more accurate understanding of the user's abilities and preferences.

02 Target Multiple Communicative Functions

To support robust and meaningful communication, it is important to track a variety of communication functions. These functions include requesting, protesting, self-advocating, initiating conversations, and repairing communication breakdowns. Monitoring these skills helps ensure the user is developing a rich and functional communication system that can be used across a variety of situations.

03 Focus on Operational Skills

Operational skills may include keeping the device near them, opening the speech app independently, charging and maintaining the device, and adjusting settings such as volume. Tracking these skills helps measure increasing independence and confidence with AAC use.

04 Monitor Overall Participation

Documenting participation levels can track increases in engagement, confidence, and successful AAC use across different environments. Changes in participation often provide valuable insight into the user's comfort and competence with their AAC device and overall use of communication.

05 Track Level of Support

Monitoring the level of support required during communication activities can provide valuable insight into progress. Data may show increasing independence, successful fading supports, and areas where additional assistance is still needed. Tracking support levels helps identify strengths, guide therapy planning, and demonstrate meaningful progress over time.