



Winter Break AAC Guide for Families



Embrace Speech Device Use During Winter Break

Winter break is the perfect opportunity to slow down, reconnect, and build meaningful communication at home. It's a great time to practice AAC in natural, everyday moments, and to grow your confidence as a communication partner.

You don't need to be a speech device expert to support your communicator. What matters most is connection, not perfection. This resource will walk you through simple, practical ways to encourage, support, and celebrate their communication.

Speech Device Communication Partner Tips For Winter Break

Model Speech Device Use:

Use the speech device yourself to demonstrate its use. Say the word out loud as you select the icon on the device. Take time to explore the device together! This can be a learning opportunity for everyone.

Patience is Key:

Understand that communicating with a speech device takes time. Encourage communication by pausing and providing time for the user to respond during the conversation.

Stay Flexible & Have Fun:

During the school break, emphasize having fun! Incorporate device use and modeling during motivating activities.

Encourage Choice-Making:

Offer choices instead of yes/no questions to encourage communication. Example: "Would you like hot chocolate or apple cider?" instead of "Do you want a drink?"

Be Consistent:

Model on the device throughout the day with different activities. Language learning takes time!

Celebrate All Attempts:

Acknowledge and praise all efforts to communicate, even if the message isn't clear initially. This builds confidence and encourages further communication attempts.

Program Winter Vocabulary:

Add your child's favorite winter vocabulary to the device! Practice asking for favorite holiday food and drinks, singing holidays songs, or identifying winter vocabulary in the environment.

Expand Communication Partners:

We encourage families to invite extended family and friends to become a part of the AAC experience. By including grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins as communication partners, you can create a more inclusive, supportive environment for your speech device user.





Speech Device Activities For Winter Break

Holiday Scavenger Hunt:

Organize a scavenger hunt using our Scavenger Hunt handout! Provide clues on the device or use the device to label winter vocabulary that you find.

Holiday Song Sing-Along:

Use the device to participate in singing or reciting holiday songs. Use this verbal routine to allow the user to fill-in words (i.e, Jingle All the.... “Way”), providing ample processing time.

Hide and Seek:

Play a modified game of hide and seek with toys. Hide a toy and ask the speech device user, “Is it here?”, or “Is it there?” focusing on yes/ no and object locations. They can choose where to search next by identifying locations on the device. For more advanced users, select words such as over, under, behind, etc.

Holiday Simon Says with Speech Device:

Play a festive round of ‘Simon Says’ using the speech device, with holiday-themed instructions like ‘Simon says, stand tall like a Christmas tree.’ This fun adaptation encourages speech device interaction and brings holiday cheer to the classic game.

Obstacle Course:

Set up an indoor obstacle course. Practice verbal routines such as “ready, set... go!” when starting the course. Give simple instructions on the device such as “stop, go, fast, slow, jump, crawl, etc.” Take turns completing the course and giving instructions so the user has a chance to explore the device.

Express Gratitude with the Speech Device:

Have each family member use the speech device to express what they are thankful for. Practice saying “thank you” on the device after receiving a gift!

Practice Greetings:

As family or friends come to visit, practice saying “hi” and “bye” on the speech device. Try having your guests model on the device, as well as having the user select the icons!



AbleNet

QuickTalker Freestyle
LET THE CONVERSATION BEGIN