



## Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC)



To communicate, we need;

- A means of communication
- A reason to communicate
- Opportunities to communicate

Some children and young people who find it difficult to communicate using speech may use AAC as a means to express themselves. Symbol/visual supports are a form of low-tech AAC (require no technology to work). AAC has many forms and none are better/more important than another.

- **UNAIDED communication** – where there is no need for any equipment e.g. sign, gesture, body language
- **AIDED communication** – where additional equipment is needed. This could be:
- **LOW-TECH** – where some basic equipment is used such as laminated symbol choosing boards, PECS books, alphabet charts etc
- **HIGH-TECH** – where more sophisticated equipment is used which usually requires a battery, such as specialist voice output communication aids, iPads/Tablets using communication Apps etc

Children and young people often use many different ways or means to communicate and one size certainly does not fit all. Many factors come into consideration when selecting AAC systems for a child. No matter what communication system/means your child uses, to be successful, they need to see what it looks like to use their communication system in real life.

This means, that we need to model the use of their communication system.

This is described in further detail in the 'modelling' section.