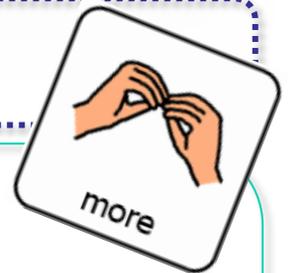


CTC-CK Augmentative Communication Services (ACS)

Core Word **MORE**



What are core words and why are they important?

Core words are made up of verbs, adjectives and pronouns. They are the words we use across all activities, situations and environments. Teaching core vocabulary to your AAC user allows them to say whatever they want, whenever they want, without limitations. In this newsletter we will focus on the Core Word **MORE**. We will learn to demonstrate / model different ways of using **MORE** throughout the day with your AAC user. **MORE** can be used to request, "I want **more**"; to ask questions, "Do you want **more**"; to give information, "There were way **more** candies than apples." . Let's plan some ways we can demonstrate/ model **MORE** with your AAC user throughout the day.

BOOKS

Books can be used for more than just reading all the words on each page. Instead, try doing picture walks while talking about what is happening in each picture.

Ten Apples up on Top

- ◆ The tiger/lion/dog has **MORE** apples on top.
- ◆ Look there are **MORE** apples!

Chicka Chicka Boom Boom

- ◆ **MORE** letters are up the tree.
- ◆ We need **MORE** room.

More Pies

- ◆ He wants **MORE** pie

ACTIVE ACTIVITIES

Let's go for a walk. You never know what might come up along the way. Having your AAC user bring their system wherever they go means that you are ready to work on language wherever you end up. Worried about the weather?, consider a large ziplock bag to protect the device.

- ◆ Model **more** "I see **more** cars than trucks"
- ◆ Model **more** " Do you want to walk some **more**?"

Snack Time: Have a snack with many pieces like fish crackers or blueberries. Just give the AAC user a couple but keep the rest in sight. Model "**more**" when they reach for the rest and give them just a few more. Repeat

BE CREATIVE

Enjoy creating your own snowman with your AAC user finding different ways to add **MORE** pieces. You might need to add **MORE** snow to make your snowball bigger, or you may need **MORE** snowballs on top, or even **MORE** buttons on your snowman. See how many way you can add **MORE** onto your snowman.



Communication Functions

Requesting

Directing

Giving Opinion

Sharing News

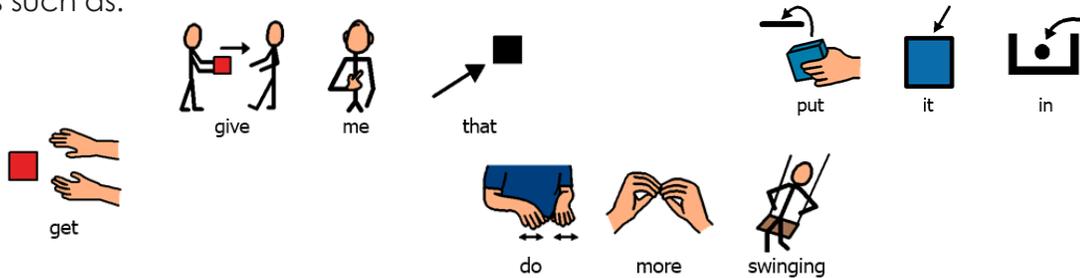
Commenting

Protesting

Asking Questions

Communication functions are the reasons we communicate. There are so many of them! A common mistake in AAC implementation is to underestimate the functions that a learner needs to be able to express themselves. This newsletter we are looking at **DIRECTING**. Directing can be very motivational for a new AAC user. It can give them the opportunity to control their environment and those in it. Focusing on **DIRECTING** allows your AAC user to decide what they want to do next, and how they want to do it.

Model words such as:



Strategy

Pause/Wait

Aided Language Stimulation

Pause/Wait

Respond

Have a Plan

Be prepared to Change

Sabotage

Expand

Obtain Attention

Importance of Core

The Power of No



There are many different strategies that you can use to help your AAC user learn to use their communication system. This newsletter we will focus on **Pause/Wait**.

Communicating with AAC takes time. We must learn to give our new AAC users the time they need to a) process what is expected from them, b) to create their message on their device and c) to send their message. The required wait time/pause will vary from user to user depending on their learned skills and how they access their device.

What to do (Example) Blowing bubbles

1. Blow a few bubbles
2. When the bubbles are gone wait and look expectantly at the User
3. Look for any indication that they want more
4. If they use their system, blow more bubbles. If they don't, model on their system and blow more bubbles.



Personal Experiences with AAC

A parent's perspective

My name is Nicole, and I am a wife and mother to four wonderful children. Our 7 year old daughter Madelyn has cerebral palsy and faces many challenges in life, one of the biggest challenges being that she is non verbal. By not having the ability to talk and express your needs and wants can be very frustrating and hard. She is a very happy and smart little girl but there has always been a communication barrier that we struggle with. We have learned ways to communicate with each other through expressions and hand motions, and while these are handy for quick yes and no responses, they are not enough to unlock her full feelings, expressions, thoughts, likes and dislikes in her every day life.

Throughout the years, Madelyn's speech and language team at The Children's Treatment Center in Chatham, and Thames Valley Children's Center in London have been very supportive and helpful in providing us with communication tools and devices in hopes to break down the communication barrier that stands between Madelyn and her world so that she can have the ability to interact, learn and express herself to others and let her voice be heard.

One of the devices Madelyn uses is a Tobii eye gaze device. We have rented this for a number of years now, and although it was a bit challenging for her to want to use and interact with at first, I'm happy to say that she is getting more comfortable with it and understanding that it is her voice when she wants to be heard. Since Madelyn has very good eye sight and eye tracking, she controls this device with her eyes. The camera at the bottom of the device tracks her eyes and can tell which PCS (Picture Communication Symbols) she is looking at and says it for her once she holds her eyes on it for one second. It is a pretty amazing tool, and although this has been a major learning process for her, when she intentionally responds to a question we ask, or says something related to what we are all talking about, everyone gets very excited. There is so much joy and pride in those moments! I know she is proud of herself too. I know that one day she will be very fluent with it, and able to say all kinds of words and sentences. We love that we can program in personal pictures and things related to her specifically as this also provides a way for her to share things about her life at home when she goes to school and for instance tell her class what she did over the weekend.

Another Augmentative communication system Madelyn uses at home and school is an eye gaze frame. She does very well expressing through PCS attached to this frame, what she would like to do or say. It gives her up to four different options and it is nice to have access to this tech free tool when needed.

We are very blessed to live in this day and age where Madelyn can have access to many different augmentative communication devices. Having your voice heard is so important and every person deserves this opportunity.

Shauna's learns the value of WAIT

On October 20th I had the privilege of participating in the CK "Voiceless But Still Talking With AAC" challenge to provide awareness to AAC. This was a 24 hour challenge to communicate using augmentative and alternative communication methods instead of my voice.

As a Physiotherapist Assistant at the CTC-CK I didn't know what to expect from the challenge but I was already coming in to the day with some knowledge and training regarding AAC and was looking forward to what I would learn.

In a reflection after the challenge I mentioned a few things I had experienced and learned that day but if I had to choose one thing to share with everyone, it would be the importance of "WAIT".

We live in a fast paced world and I realized how quickly communication happens. A few times that day, I passed on joining the conversation because I needed time to put my message together. This was difficult because I did want to share in the conversation. When I did talk, I was relying on my communication partners to WAIT for me and it was uncomfortable at times.

Moving forward, I will practice being more comfortable waiting. I encourage everyone to be more comfortable waiting and allowing the AAC communicator their turn in the conversation and also time to put their message together.

I can say with confidence after this challenge, giving everyone the chance to say what they want to is worth waiting for.

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