

## Supporting Alternative and Augmentative Communication (AAC)

It's important to help a child to learn to use their own talker or book. It's important to learn to just chat. Chatting helps to keep the conversation going. Here are some ideas.

- Try **not** to “test” the child by saying things like “can you find the letter?”
- Try **not** to make the child use their book or device when they are already talking. For example, by interrupting to say “can you use your talker?” when someone prefers to talk. (Some adult AAC users say it is upsetting and unhelpful to be told which sort of communication to use. They might be more able to communicate in different ways on different days) But please **show** the child how he might have used his AAC.
- You use the device or book when you are talking to the child. This helps to model how you can use the book or talker.
- Create reasons and times to talk. Chat about things the child is interested in, as well as the everyday things.
- Make sure the child's AAC device/book is always there.

### **When chatting:**

- try leaving familiar phrases / sentences unfinished to encourage your partner to join in
- Pause and slow down. Don't fill in all the silence.
- Offer choices
- give lots of time to “play” with and explore a device / book
- It's better to offer more symbols than the child might seem to need. He might grow to need them.
- Allow lots of time for skills to grow. AAC is often not a “quick fix” but people can become very good at using it with time, practice and encouragement.

So: Model to the child how to use

Make sure there are lots of times when the child can use the book or device.

Enjoy Chatting