

## AAC and Adult Life: New Directions for AAC Research, Technology, and Instruction





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1

## Transition goals


- Have a safe place to live
- Participate in meaningful activities
- Access to services
- Develop friendships and intimate relationships



2

## Visit the future



- Talk to someone who is already there
  - Success stories and challenges
- Use this information to guide intervention




*AAC has given me the tools to live independently, to participate in society, and to contribute to the lives of others as a husband, teacher, and friend.*

**chris klein**

McNaughton, Light, Beukelman, Klein, Nieder, & Nazareth (2019)


3



**Tracy Rackensperger (Ph.D)**

- Co-Leader of Training and Dissemination Team for the RERC on AAC
- University of Georgia

4



Taking thoughtful risks,  
(with appropriate supports)

5

### Direct Support Professionals

No matter where someone lives, their quality of life depends to a great extent on the degree to which they can direct the services of the person who provides attendant care

- Barbara Collier, 2010



6

### Documenting Service Routines

- Identify important contexts
  - Transfers, mealtimes, toileting
- Document Service Routine
  - Step-by-step description
    - Photos
- Binders, pages on wall, programmed into devices




7

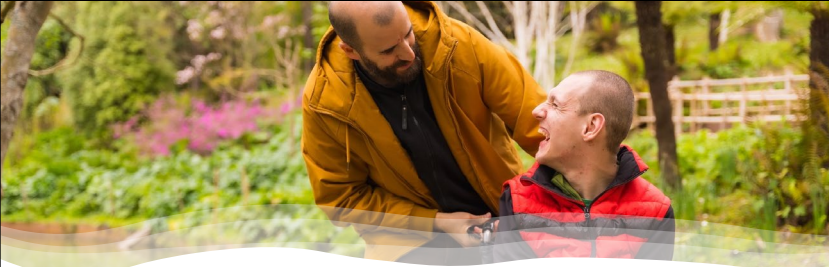
### Service Routine for Nail Care

(Collier et al., (2010))

- When cutting or cleaning my nails, it is important to know that my hand may clench. This is due to my spasticity. It does not help to ask me to relax or open my hand. I cannot control it.
- The best thing to do is
  - Gently pry open each finger
  - Hold each nail firmly when cut or clean the nail
  - Cut my nails short
  - File any jagged nails because I might scratch myself



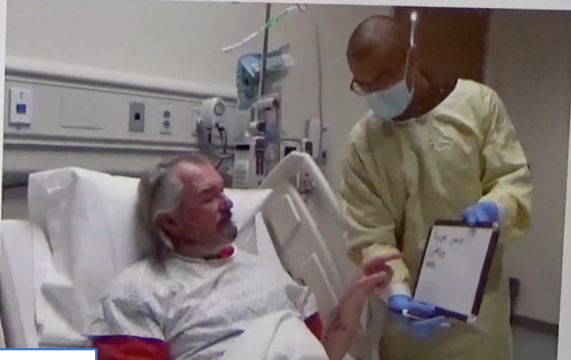
8



### Communication and Self-determination

- Communicate what they want and how they want it done (**requires specific vocabulary**)
  - Give polite feedback
  - Problem solve when “mistakes” are made (during roleplay practice)
- Build expectation that they have the right to be listened to


9

Introduction	
Introduction	
Preview Checklist	
Step 1 Ready the environment	
Step 2 Ready the person & their communication tools	

mTraining  
Gormley et al , 2023)

Introduction

10

Introduction	<h2>Offer Choices to a Friend</h2> 
Offer Choices to a Friend	
Preview Checklist	
Step 1 Set up	
Step 2 Offer choice	
Step 3 Wait and watch	

mTraining  
McCarty et al (2023)

Introduction

INCREASE SPEED PAUSE

11

## Lance McLemore

- Graduated University of Alabama in Huntsville with a BA in studio art and philosophy.
- Works as an ambassador for PRC-Saltito and the Center for AAC and Autism.
- Speaks at state, national, and international conferences.
- Paid member of the Training and Dissemination Team for the RERC on AAC



12

**AAC Learning Center**

Available courses

- Visual Supports for Participation and Communication: An OI
- AAC for Children: An Introduction to Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) supports communication for children who have difficulty with speech
- Alternative Access: Alternative access provides methods and strategies to enable people with disabilities to access technology
- Developing AAC Systems for Children: AAC systems that are based on the knowledge, skills, and interests of the individual child, and support participation in a wide variety of activities
- Family-Centered AAC: Active Learning for SLTs: The use of Family-Centered skills, including active listening, result in positive relationships with family members and increased autonomy
- Finding AAC for Children: The course provides information on finding AAC systems and services for school age children in the United States

13

## AAC Learning Center

- Active Listening for SLPs
  - Mandak et al (2020)
- 2,100 certificates of completion
- 95% recommend or highly recommend

L Listen, Empathize, Communicate Respect

A Ask Questions

F Focus on the Issues

F Find a First Step

14

## Video with Visual Scene Displays

**RERC on AAC**

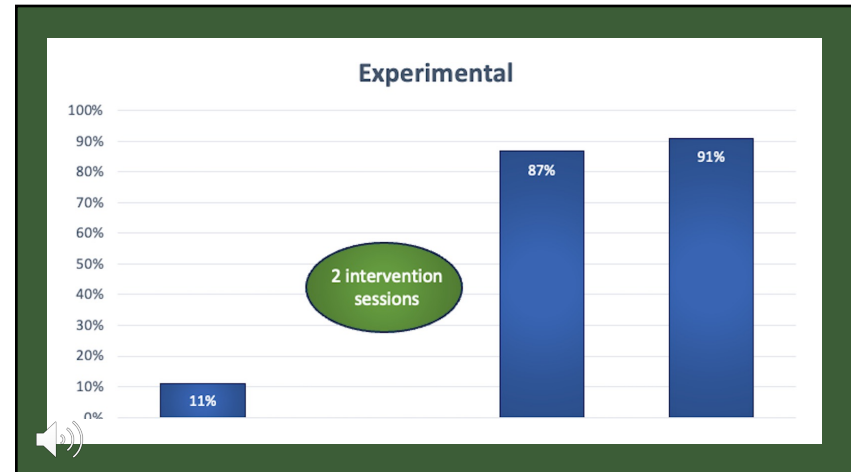
**Participation support**

- Watch the video until a "pause" (still image)
- Cue to perform step


**Communication support**


- The still image is a *Visual Scene Display*
- Can be programmed with hotspots

15



16





## Patient-Provider Interactions for AAC Users

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Emergency Room

- *They didn't talk to me. They didn't know I could communicate. They assumed that I had an intellectual disability (C-J)*
- *They were moving too fast. They were in too much of a hurry and I couldn't really get out my thoughts (D-M)*
- *A doctor told us that a person with CP cannot feel pain (T-D)*

17

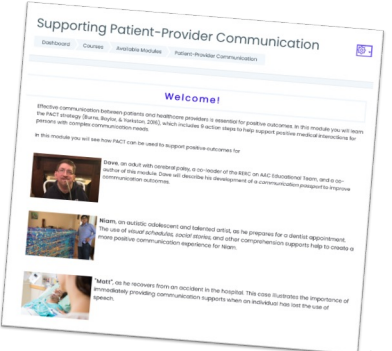
## Supporting Patient-Provider Communication (Stroschein et al, 2021)


**P** Prepare for the visit

**A** Ask questions

**C** Create a plan

**T** Take away material





18

## Social interaction in adolescence

- Identify a topic of shared interest
- Make use of specialized vocabulary
- Take turns within the interaction





19

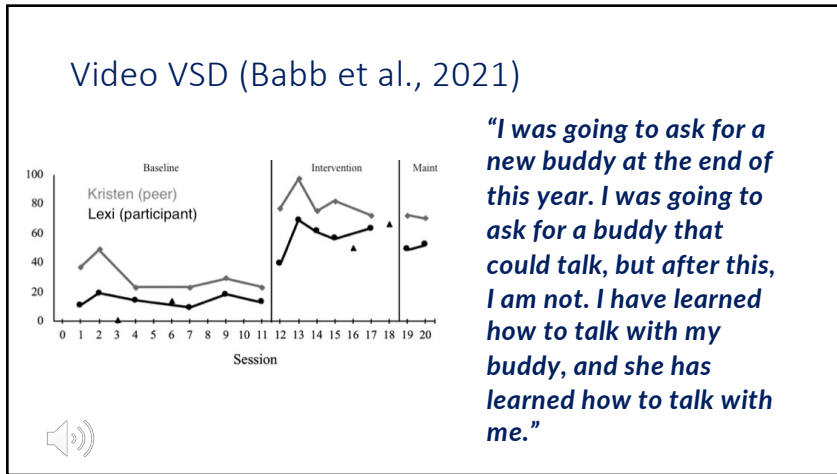


- Dyads of autistic adolescents and high school peers
- 3' training in use of video VSD app
- Videos selected by dyads

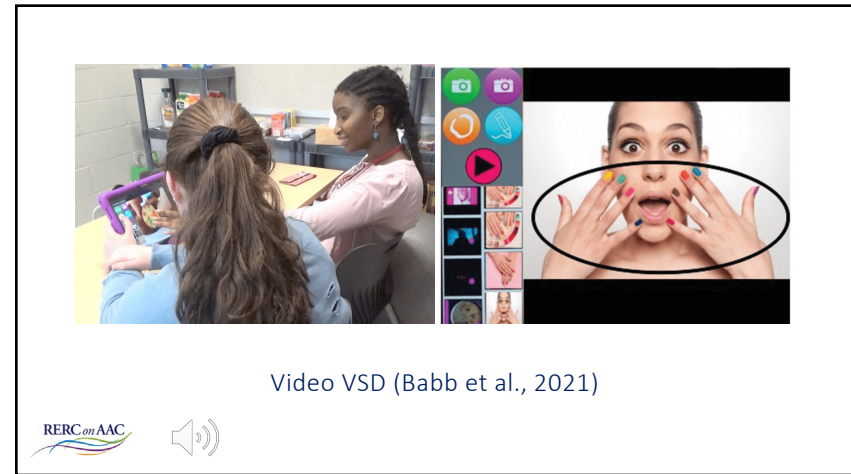
Video VSD (Babb et al., 2021)

20



21



22

### Rackensperger (2006)

- I am a very ambitious individual with lots of goals for my life....I, and others who use augmentative communication, want good jobs, good places to live, and individuals who care about us and love us. It is important for the individuals who work with people who use augmentative communication to believe they can **succeed at high levels.**

23

People tend to see us like projects, broken things that need to be fixed.

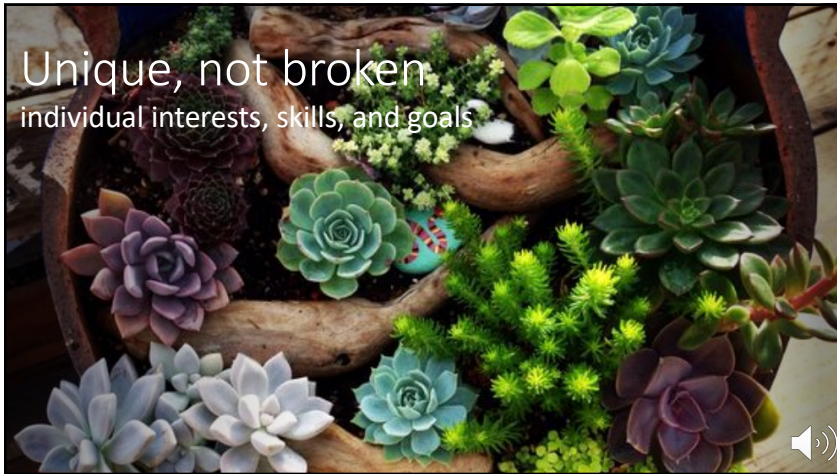
Create a positive supportive learning environment, then see what happens.

Success cannot be guaranteed. We cannot and should not be insulated from the possibility of failure. Important lessons can be learned from failures.

If risks are not taken, then we might not reach as high as we could.

Lance McLemore

24



25

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26