Aided Language Stimulation

What is Language Stimulation (ALS)?

- An approach in which the communication partner simultaneously selects vocabulary (picture symbols) on the child's communication display in conjunction with speaking the verbal language.
- Through the modeling process, the concept of using the picture symbols interactively is demonstrated for the individual.
- Learners are prompted to use symbols to communicate within the context of motivating and frequently-occurring routines.
- It allows children using Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) to learn language the same way typical children learning language, through others modeling in natural interaction.
- This strategy has been shown to help children develop receptive and expressive language, expand their vocabulary and the amount of words/symbols they combine.

Aided Language Stimulation is more than modeling "this symbol means this", but also:

1. How symbols can be used to say real things in real situations
2. Get ideas of what to say (i.e., different words) and when to say it
3. To develop syntax, or sentence structure and grammar
4. To learn different reasons to communicate
5. How to use the communication device
6. Repair strategies when mistakes are made

How Do I Use ALS With My Child/Student?

To Do:	Example: "Go Out"
1. **Attention**: Make sure that the individual is attending	
2. **Message and Picture Symbols:** Create a message by selecting the picture symbols on the child's AAC device. While selecting the picture symbol, also say the word.	*Select* "GO" and "OUT." *Say*, "Go out."
3. **Complete the Sentence:** Create a complete sentence with the selected icons and repeat it verbally to the child. Keep sentence short but complete.	- Say, "I want to go out."
4. **Response:** Ask the child a follow-up question to keep the interaction going.	- Say, "Would you like to go out?"

Other Tips

- Consider the child's pace when modeling pointing to symbols. Provide enough time for them to follow your model.
- No matter what the child selects on the device, always RESPOND. Provide natural consequences to what they said, even if it seems like a mistake.
- Model the type of language you hope the child will produce. Consider the child's current expressive language abilities and always model 1-2 words/symbols beyond that level.

For more information and examples, go to:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w7jUIhNixK8
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vUY6oQoSTXw

Resources:
AAC Institute (2011). Aided Language Stimulation [PDF document]. Retrieved from
www.aacinstitute.org/aactionpoints/130627AidedLanguageStimulation
S.Sennott, L. Burkhart, C. Ramsey-Musselwhite, & J. Cafiero. (2010). Aided Language
Stimulation: Research to Practice [PowerPoint slides]. Retrieved from
www.lburkhart.com/ATIA_ALgS_handout_1_10.pdf

Aided Language Stimulation | 2021-12-06
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