



**LOOK THROUGH A LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT LENS  
TO SET EXPECTATIONS AND GUIDE INTERVENTION FOR AAC USERS**

<b>TYPICAL LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT</b>	<b>AAC LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT</b>
We speak verbally to our babies for a year without requiring immediate speech from them.	We use aided language stimulation (modelling on the device) to communicate to our beginning AAC users without expecting immediate output from them.
Children who develop verbal speech and language learn best when language is modeled within a meaningful context in a variety of natural settings.	Children who develop language abilities using AAC learn best when language is modeled within a meaningful context in variety of natural settings.
We use a robust vocabulary when speaking to our babies, we include verbs, adjectives, nouns, pronouns, questions, etc. and use language for many different functions (to request, protest, describe, question, etc.).	We provide an AAC system with a robust vocabulary, which includes nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, question words etc., so that we can model many different functions of language.
We don't stop talking to our babies if they don't begin to talk after a few months – we keep talking, and talking, and talking.	We don't stop modelling language if our AAC users don't begin using their device after a few months – we keep modelling, and modelling, and modelling.
Receptive language skills (understanding) develop before expressive language skills (verbal output).	Receptive language skills (understanding their AAC vocabulary) develop before expressive language skills (using their AAC system to communicate).
We use short and simple, yet grammatically correct sentences when speaking to our young children.	We speak in grammatically correct sentences to our AAC users while modeling language on their device 1 word above what they are currently using to express themselves.
Babies babble and experiment with sounds and words before they begin to use them in a meaningful way.	AAC users push a lot of buttons and explore their devices before they begin to use them in a meaningful way.
Toddlers begin speaking by using single words, they do not begin speaking in complete sentences.	AAC users usually begin communicating by hitting single buttons, they are not expected to begin communicating by combining a sequence of buttons.
Once children begin to participate in group social play and pre-academic settings, we need to teach them when it's appropriate to speak and when they need to listen quietly.	Once our children who use AAC begin to participate in social, play, and pre-academic settings, we must teach them when it is appropriate to communicate using their device and when they need to listen quietly.
Children should always have the opportunity to request items freely, even if that choice may not be an option or the answer is 'no'.	Children who use AAC should always have access to their vocabulary to request whatever they want using their device, even if that choice isn't available or the answer is 'no'.