



**Communication for Now
Communication for Life –
Using Your Resources to Elevate AAC
Success**

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Some interesting facts on communication disabilities:

- 8 out of 1,000 people worldwide cannot use speech to communicate.
- 2-3 million people in the U.S. could benefit from speech generating devices.
 - **Only 5% of these people have a speech device.**

Before we go any further Let's Review Our Beliefs at Tobii Dynavox



- Presume competence regardless of disorder
- All deserve access to effective communication, access and learning tools
- Communication is a right, not a privilege
- Provide meaningful supports and language that aid in the development of literacy
- Seek dignity and respect for all with complex communication and learning needs
- Strong communication partners are needed to support students with complex needs
- Help others learn how to actively participate in life
- Solutions offered must be anchored in trial with users and evidence-based practice

These beliefs are at the core of what drives all we do.

What is Augmentative & Alternative Communication?

AAC is any device, system or method that improves a person's ability to communicate effectively and participate in the world around them. It can be implemented at any time.

Typically, the earlier in the care process, the better.



Unaided



“Low-Tech”

** Funded as DME*



Speech-Generating Devices*

We Believe a Communication System Should:

- Increase participation in all environments
- Support timely interaction
- Provide meaningful language to the recipient
- Support language and literacy development
- Encourage successful day-to-day, face-to-face, real-time interaction
- Be age and level appropriate

Language should meet the needs of individuals with complex communication by providing the messages needed to say what they want (**real-life**), how they want (**precise**) and when they want (**efficient**)!



Engagement

- Communication tools to engage in meaningful conversations, and to show what they know; even more than their current language and literacy skills may allow.



Literacy

- Core word set with a systematic growth and based on current research
- Additional tools to develop higher level language & Literacy skills



Growth

- Supporting two ways to “grow” an AAC system
- **Location Based:** Begin with a large number of buttons (e.g., larger grid size such as 7 X 9) and grow systematically
- **Size base:** Begin with a small number of buttons and grow systematically (e.g., smaller grid size (3 x 3) and grow (4 x 4, 5 x 5), etc.)

www.project-core.com

AAC Myths

- Choosing to use an AAC system is giving up - “the easy way out”
- AAC will hinder speech and language development
- AAC is an individual’s sole communication modality
- The focus of AAC use is the assessment of devices and focus on technology

Effective Communication

“Effective communication is essential for learning and development, personal care, social engagement, education, and employment.” (Beukelman and Mirenda, 2013)

How do I know if someone could benefit from AAC???

Communication Success Screening

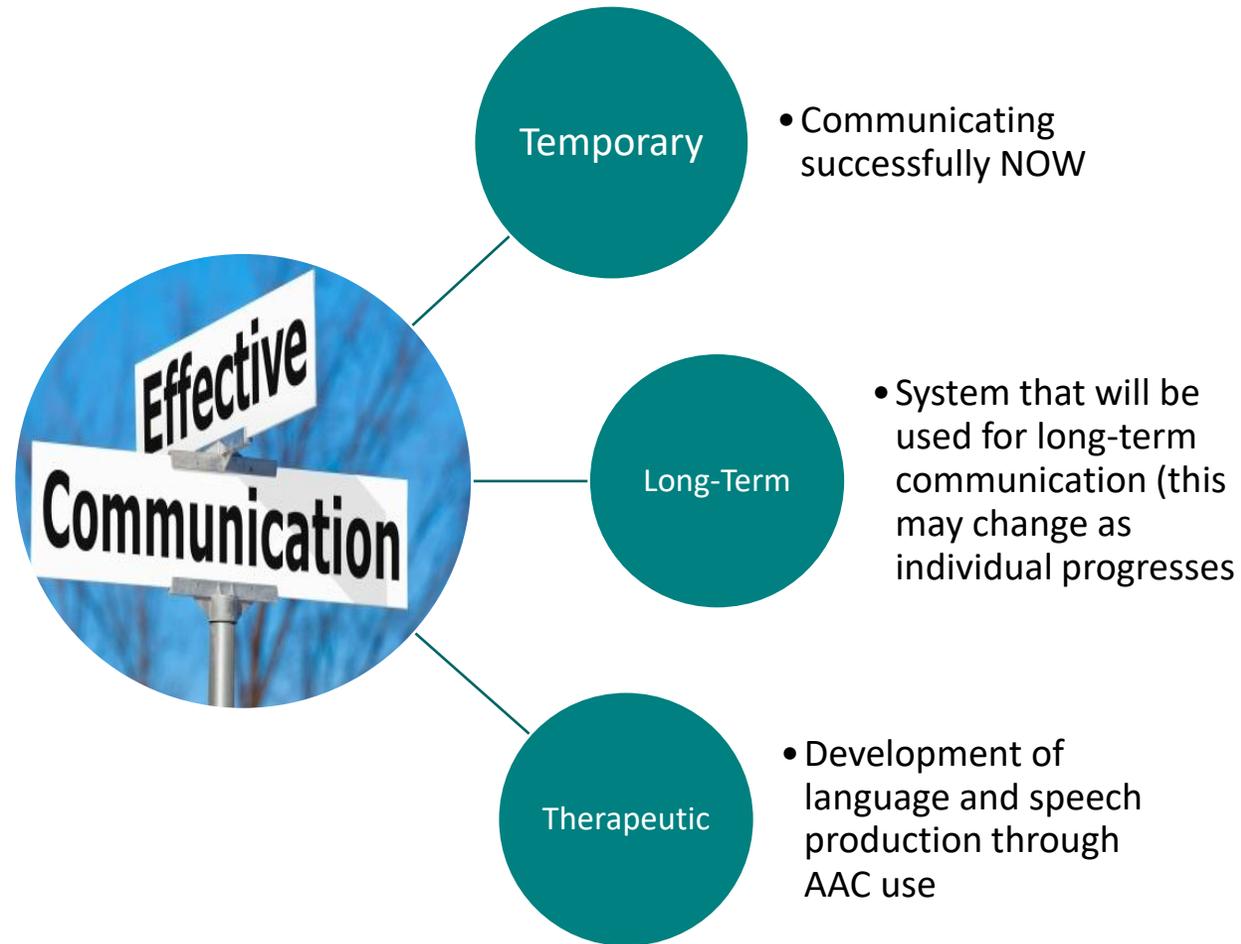
If you know an individual who has difficulty communicating with others, the following checklist may help you determine whether you should explore some communication tools that could help. You can use this screening in a few different ways:

- Complete this screening on your own and then discuss with the appropriate individual (e.g., physician, speech-language pathologist, educator, etc).
 - Have each member of the intervention team (e.g., speech-language pathologist, family members, educators, job coach, etc.) answer these questions individually and then come together to discuss.
1. Does the individual have a diagnosis (e.g., autism, CP, aphasia, ALS, etc.) that puts him/her at risk for speech and language challenges? Yes___ No___
 2. Does the individual have less than 20 words or signs/signals that can be understood by unfamiliar listeners? Yes___ No___
 3. Does the individual have difficulty communicating his/her ideas (e.g., asking for a desired

Empowering:

- Requesting basic needs- food, play
- Participation in classroom routines/activities
- Language development
- Speech production development
- Social interaction/engagement
- Academics- reading, writing, math
- Vocational/transitional prep

Goals of AAC



Now what?

- An individual has been identified as a possible AAC candidate by the team
- Referral for AAC evaluation
 - Outpatient speech language pathologist
 - Speech Language Pathologists in your school district
 - District Contact Person (larger districts)
 - CESAs
- AAC Referral Forms - beneficial for outside evaluators, i.e., private therapy clinics, outpatient SLPs

SGD Evaluation

Why does this individual need a SGD?

How they are communicating in their natural environment?

What's missing?

- Full, complete messages
- Asking questions
- Socialization
- Word Finding
- Misunderstood words

Which features of an SGD are required to match their abilities and compensate for their areas of need?

What language supports are necessary?

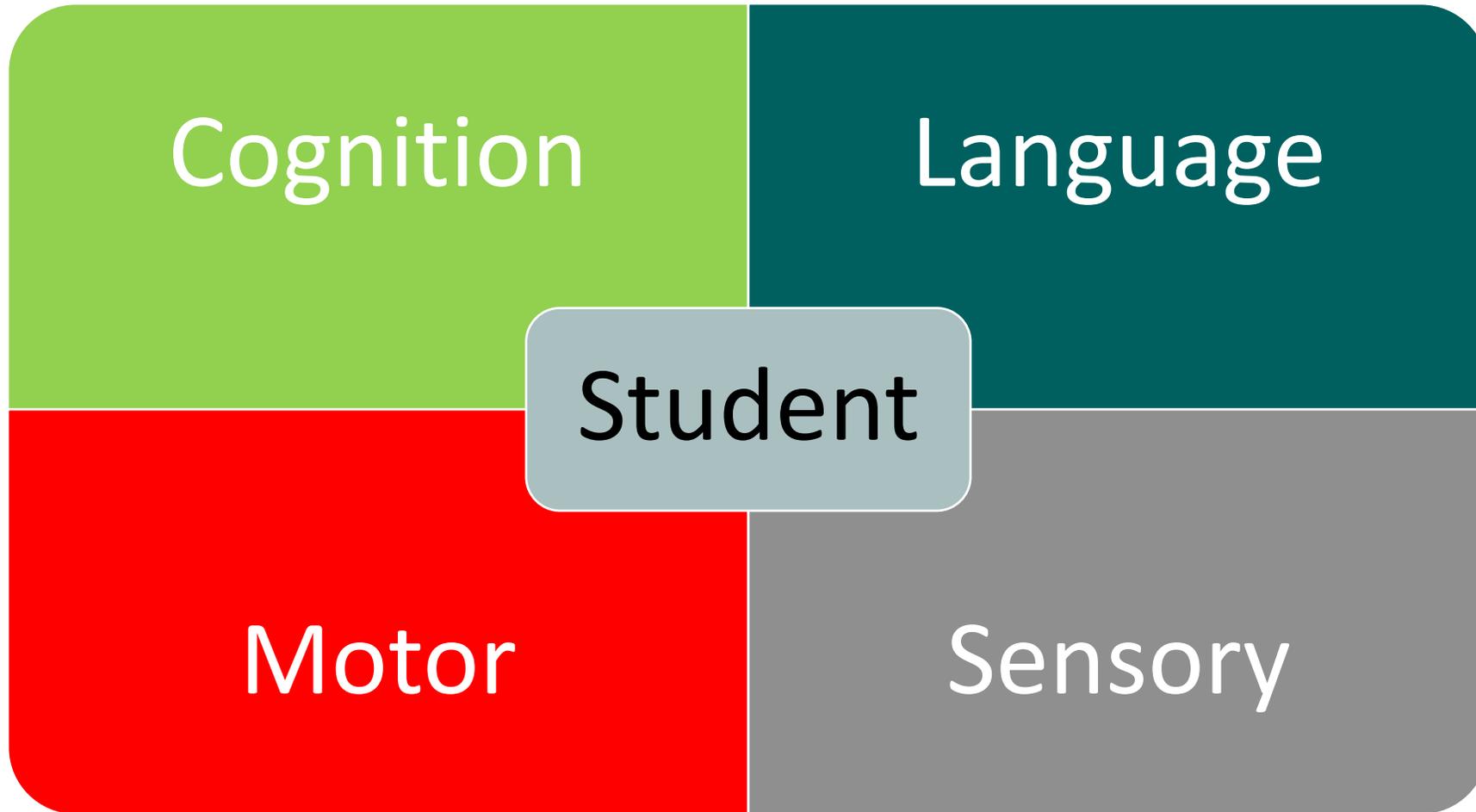
- Topic Messages
- Word Lists
- Core Words
- Word Prediction
- Quick Phrases
- Behavioral Supports
- Visual Scene Display

Choosing a Communication System

- ONE SIZE DOES NOT FIT ALL!



Assessing Student Strengths/Weaknesses



Preparing for an Eval

Choosing a Pageset:

- Access – keyguard? Scanning? Is swiping an issue?
- Language ability – spelling/reading skills?
- Age

Supports:

- Evaluation specific resources and supports on mytobiidynavox.com
- AAC Needs Assessment, Topic Interest Inventory, Observation of the Communication Environment and many more!

Evaluation Tools!!

Evaluation Tools

Use these forms, checklists, and activities as you assess an individual's need for and ability to use AAC.

Screening Tools



[Communication Success Screening](#)

Use this checklist to determine if someone you know should explore alternative communication options.



[Access Screening Tool](#)

This screening tool will help you identify potential access methods for making selections in the Compass software.

Identifying Needs and Interests



[AAC Needs Assessment](#)

Identify what is or is not important for an individual to communication.



[Observation of the Communication Environment](#)

This observation form can help identify communication skills and needs.



[Topic Interest Inventory](#)

Use the results to select topics within the Stroke & Brain Injury Persona.



[Scanning Checklist](#)

Use this checklist to record possible scanning skills.



[Direct Selection Checklist](#)

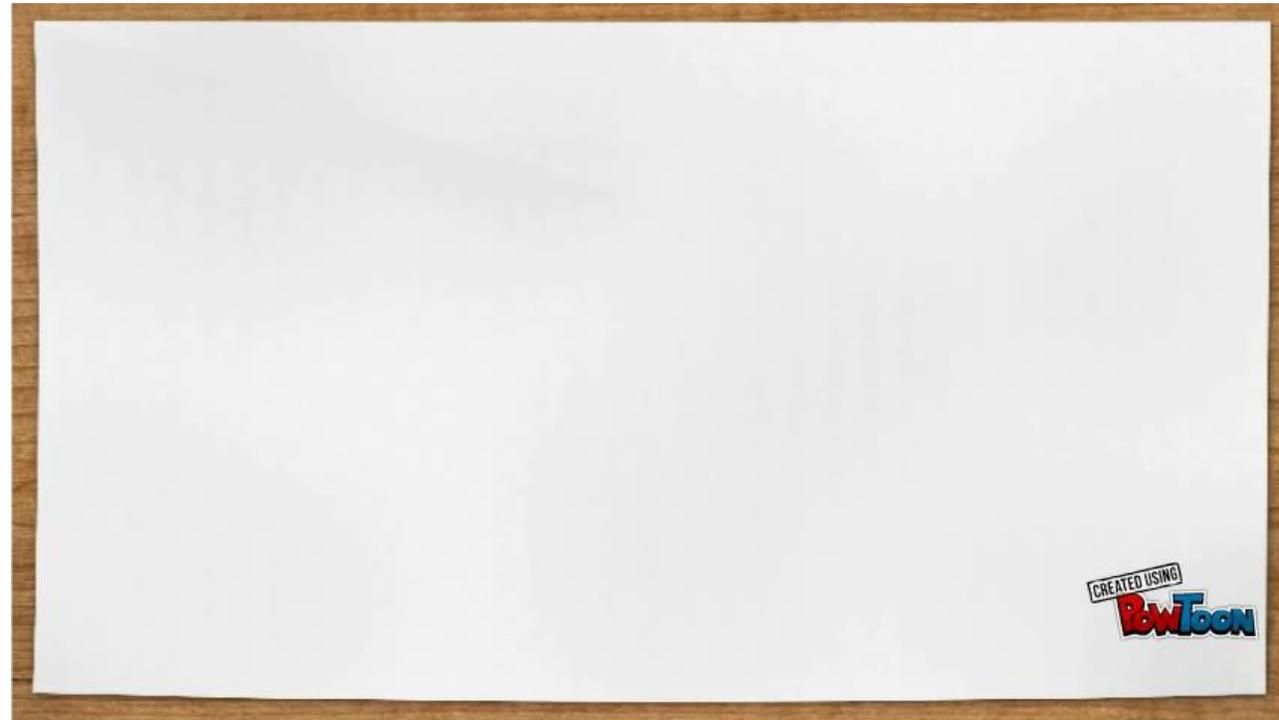
Therapy – Beyond Requesting from Research

- Positive Communication Environment
- Aided Language Input & Recasting
- Purposeful Misunderstanding & Sabotage
- Waiting & Prompting Hierarchy

Positive Communication Environment

- Respond to all forms of communication (Mirenda, 1997).
 - Encourages further communication.
 - Reduced passivity.
- Presume competence (ASHA, 2004; Jorgenson, 2005).
- Find solutions to challenges.
 - Identify and solve.
 - Accept and move on.
 - *Don't admire the problem!*
- Focus on the positive results.
 - More communication.
 - Greater independence.
 - Building relationships.
 - Willingness to try.

Aided Language Input



Aided Language Input

“The average 18 month old child has been exposed to 4,380 hours of oral language at a rate of 8 hours/day from birth. A child who has a communication system and receives speech/language therapy two times per week for 20-30 minutes sessions will reach this same amount of language exposure in 84 years.” (Korsten, n.d.)

- Impacts learning of the augmented communicator (Dade et al, 2009; Drager, 2009; Binger & Light, 2007).
- Impacts learning by the partner. *We always want to be a bit ahead.*

Recasting

- Add or correct information without obstructing the natural flow of communication.
- A form of modelling that builds on Aided Language Input.
- Use:
 - Emphasize with loudness and pause time the corrected or new information
 - Do not make the learner repeat your recast

Binger & Light, 2008

<http://praacticalaac.org/strategy/recasting-a-language-facilitation-strategy/>

Learner	Facilitator
"want cookie"	"I love cookies, my favorite are chocolate chips" OR "I want the cookie please"
"he walket in"	"yes,he WALKED in"
"boy are playing"	"wow, the boy is playing ball"
I want read.	"oh you want TO read." OR "What do you want to read?"

Purposeful Misunderstanding & Sabotage

- Requires a communicative response.
- Changes the way an activity typically happens.
- Various types to obtain various results:
 - Incorrect item.
 - Missing item.
 - Omitted step.
 - Incomplete step.
 - Purposeful misunderstanding.

Goosens', Crain, & Elder, 1992

Story Book Reading (Kent-Walsh et al, 2010)

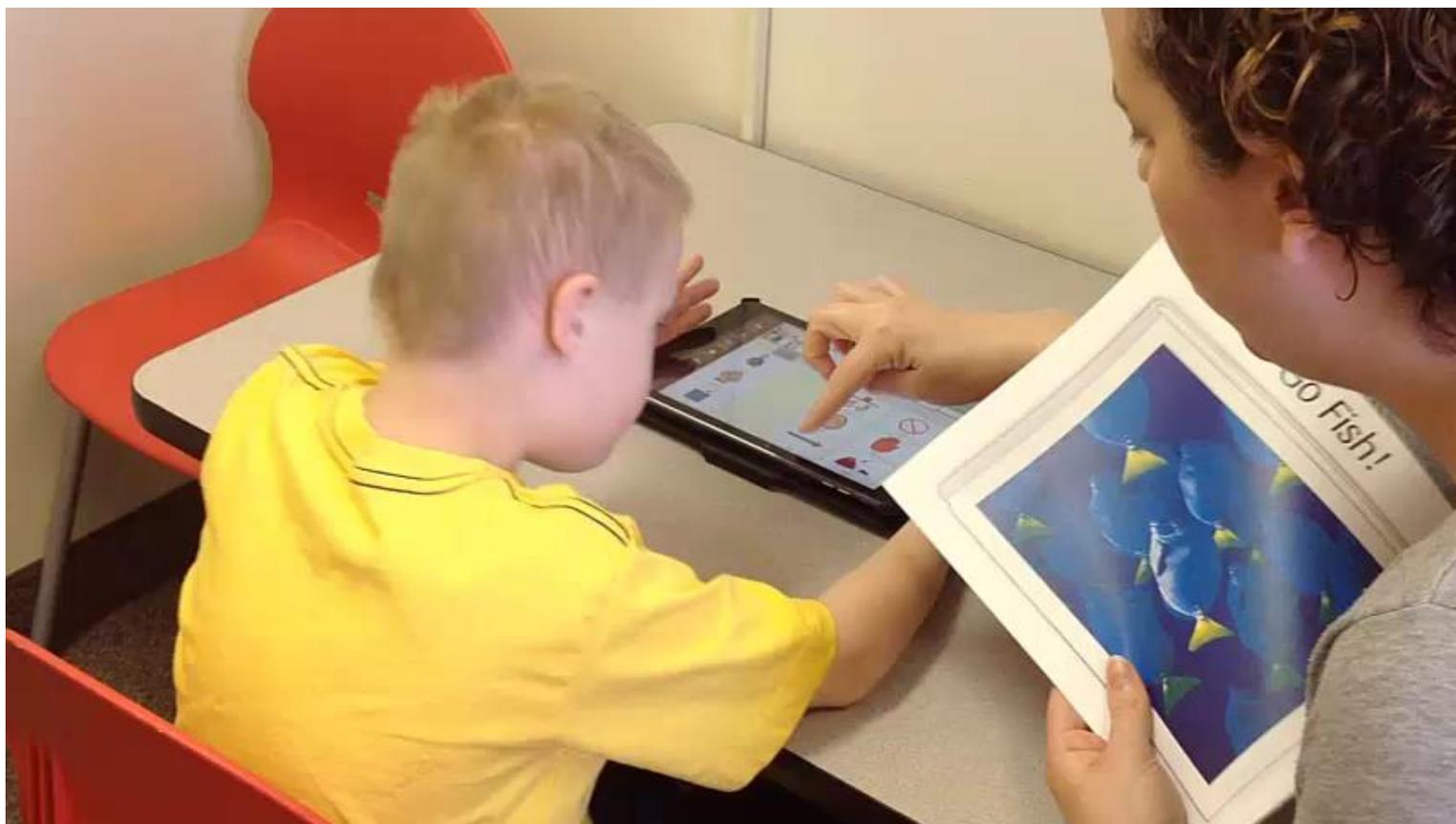


- Mothers read story and provided the opportunity and expectation for their child to take a turn
 - Read + provide an aided AAC model; wait
 - Ask a wh-question + provide an aided AAC model; wait
 - Answer the wh-question + provide an aided AAC model; wait
- All children took turns following only the read/wait stage of intervention (range 20%-92% of turns)
- Children doubled to quadrupled their use of comments (labeling and describing)!
- Maintained levels of commenting

What Does Success Look Like?

Success might include:

- Increased attention to interactions,
- Initiation of communication,
- Use of more vocabulary,
- Longer interactions,
- Use of more tools or pages,
- Enjoyment of interaction, and/or
- More independence in communication.



Online Resources

- Trial Guides
- Lesson Plans
- Core Books



Resources, Resources and MORE Resources @ mytobiidynavox.com



Resources

Getting Started with Compass

Practical, real-life resources and suggestions to encourage successful communication using Compass.

Compass

Getting Started with Communicator

Practical, real-life resources and suggestions to encourage successful communication using Communicator.

Communicator

Ideas for Therapy and Everyday Use

Practical, real-life resources and suggestions to encourage successful communication using your AAC solution.

All Ideas

Understanding Compass

Visual supports that explain communication tools, levels, and other features of your Compass software.

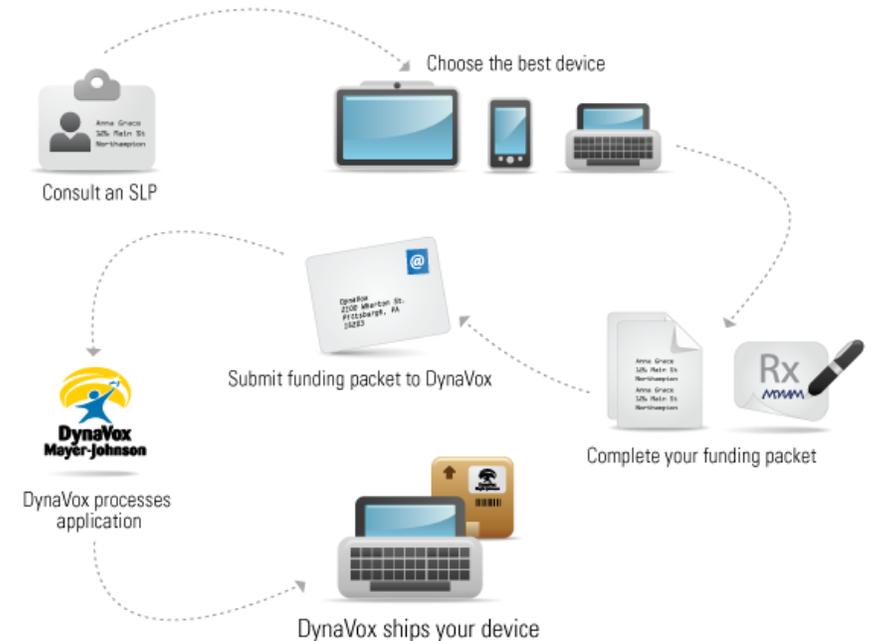
All Compass

AAC 101

Evaluation Tools

The Funding Process

1. AAC Evaluation by an SLP (and possibly OT, PT, AT Coordinator and/or others)
 - Choose the device that best matches needs
2. Complete the funding packet
 - Available online (www.tobiidynavoxfunding.com)
 - Download the forms and print them off
 - Utilize our eFunding site <https://efunding.tobiidynavox.com/>
3. Funding team processes packet
4. If approved, device ships



Tobii Dynavox Hardware



I-13 and I-16

A Windows-based, eye-gaze enabled speech-generating device designed for people with cerebral palsy, ALS, spinal cord injury, Rett syndrome, and more.

[Eligible for funding.](#)
[Learn more.](#)



TD Pilot

An iPadOS-based eye gaze enabled communication device designed to empower people with ALS, spinal cord injury, cerebral palsy and more.

[Eligible for funding.](#)
[Learn more.](#)



I-110

A Windows-based, ultra-durable speech-generating device built for communication on the go.

[Eligible for funding.](#)
[Learn more.](#)



SC Tablet

An iPadOS-based speech-generating device with AAC apps for symbol communicators.

[Eligible for funding.](#)
[Learn more.](#)



EM-12

A Microsoft Surface Pro-based speech-generating device with a durable case.

[Eligible for funding.](#)
[Learn more.](#)



PCEye 5

A compact, peripheral eye tracker for fully controlling a Windows computer using their eyes. Compatible with any Windows computer, laptop, or tablet. [Learn more.](#)



More Hardware

See our website for all devices, accessories, mounts, and more. [Explore devices.](#) [Explore accessories.](#)

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WI Medicaid Recommendations

- 4-week trial across ALL communication environments – school, home and community
- Must demonstrate intent to communicate with device
- Focus on *functional* communication and conversation – “beyond requesting”
- Establish recommended equipment to be “least costly alternative”
- Demonstrated family advocacy

WI Medicaid FUNDING PACKET CHECKLIST

- Evaluation Report
- WI PA-DMEA
- Copy of current IEP
- Client Information Form
- Release of Benefits and Assignment
- Insurance card copies
- Supporting letters of advocacy
- Physician Rx
- Face-to-face physician visit notes (must state need for SGD and performed within 6 months of prescription)

TRIAL OPTIONS

4-WEEK RENTAL/TRIAL THROUGH TOBII DYNAVOX

- PRE-TRIAL EVALUATION REPORT
 - CLIENT INFORMATION FORM
 - INSURANCE INFORMATION
 - FOR USE ACROSS ALL COMMUNICATION ENVIRONMENTS
 - FAMILY ASSUMES RESPONSIBILITY
 - NO COST TO FAMILIES
-

4-WEEK LOAN THROUGH ATLC LENDING LIBRARY

- VISIT WEBSITE: ATCLIBRARY.ORG ,TO VIEW AVAILABLE DEVICES FOR TRIAL
 - RESERVE DEVICE, AND WHEN AVAILABLE, DEVICE WILL BE SHIPPED TO YOU
 - DEVICES ARE RESPONSIBILITY OF SLP
 - NO COST
-

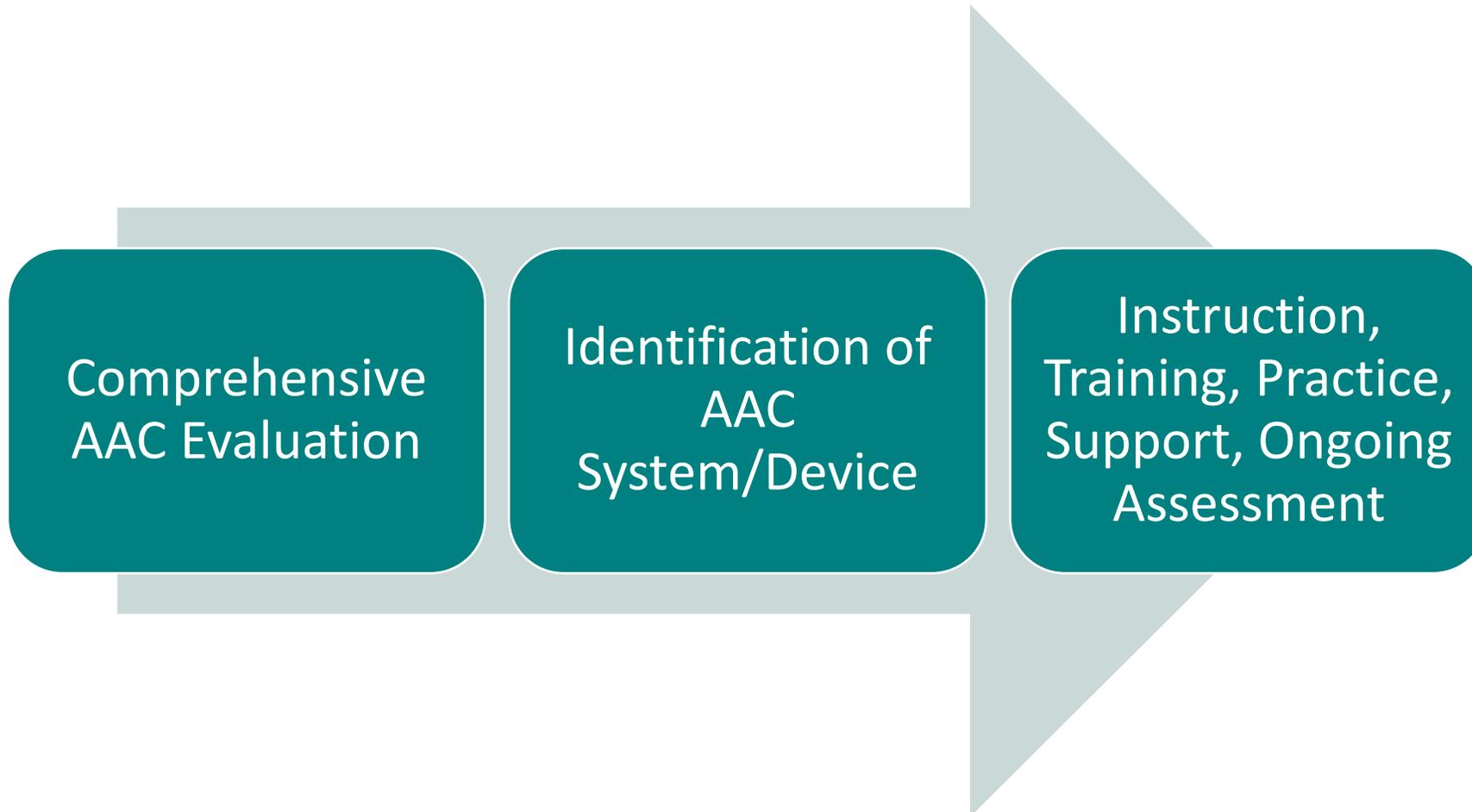
ON-DEMAND LOAN PROGRAM THROUGH TOBII DYNAVOX

- BECOME AN ON-DEMAND CERTIFIED SLP!
 - CHECK OUT UP TO 4 DEVICES AT A TIME X 2 WEEKS
 - DEVICES ARE RESPONSIBILITY OF SLP
 - NO COST
-

TRIAL OPTIONS

- 60-DAY FREE TRIAL OF TD SNAP SOFTWARE!!!
 - <https://learn.tobiidynavox.com/Courses/CourseContent?courseId=612>
- TD Snap Pricing:
 - \$49.99 iOS
 - \$149.99 Windows

Time and Effort for Success!



Comprehensive
AAC Evaluation

Identification of
AAC
System/Device

Instruction,
Training, Practice,
Support, Ongoing
Assessment



Thank You!

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