



Motor Planning for Communication

Can the person automatically make their body do what they want to when they need to?



What is Motor Planning?

- A skill that allows us to remember and do the steps in the right order to make a movement happen.
- It helps us learn motor actions by adjusting. When learning to riding a bike, you get instant feedback and adjust what you're doing—try again and keep adjusting until you find the best way of riding. From there, your brain quickly plans what to do every time you ride the bike.
- We don't need to consciously figure out how to do something each time we need to.
- We can predict what we are supposed to do

Why is Motor Planning important?

- We use it to do any physical activity, including everyday tasks like brushing teeth
- We typically get faster and more efficient as we practice
- For example, brushing teeth can seem automatic. But our brain actually does lightning-fast planning before and during brushing. It determines how and in what order we'll move.

What happens when Motor Planning is difficult?

- When someone has trouble with it, they don't easily learn from feedback.
- Even if they've done a task before, it's like the first time.
- People who struggle with motor planning may take a long time to learn/complete physical tasks, like buttoning.
- They may be slow carrying out verbal instructions
- They may have trouble forming words, have unclear speech or can only say one word at a time

What about Motor Planning in communication using AAC?

- Even someone with motor planning difficulties can use AAC
- To be automatic, AAC needs to be predictable
- Once someone has learned the location of a word on a board/device, it needs to stay there.
- They will not have to relearn it—once they know how to say "juice" with AAC, if "juice" is in the same place they will always know how to say it.
- The more predictable AAC is, the faster and easier it becomes