



Opening The Box

A device shows up –now what?



Beginning

- Exciting time for all involved with person getting AAC.
- Can be hint of fear—of failure, too
- Concerns that person will be confused
- Or concerns that person might be rough or break it
- If left in the box, nothing will happen
- Take a deep breath. Decide to get started.

Tell the person purpose of the device

- Tell them “This is to help you tell people what you want and show EVERYONE how smart you are.”
- What if person won't understand complex sentences? Try it anyway.
- Person will understand that 1) you are directly talking to them, and 2) your tone is positive.

Make sure the person can access the screen

- What you think is comfortable, may not be for the person.
- Consider changing device angle/ location

Set up the language

- Personalize device—name, favorite things, etc.
- Set comments/questions on their favorite interests.
- Set quick phrases/comments to direct their own care
- Allow their sense of humor to shine

What to teach first

- Get person to engage
- Teach location of words about what they are engaged in
- Begin to use device yourself so person sees it can be their voice and used successfully

Social Stories

- Develop stories about the device
- Mini-books help person understand changes in routines
- Written on a tablet, computer, or on paper
- Shared over and over to help person understand device

Remember

- Be patient with yourself and the person.
- Keep at it. Believe that they can do it!

(Adapted from www.SpeakForYourself.org and www.PrAACticalAAC.org)