



Ready or Not?

Ready! –

There are no required skills before starting AAC.



Are there certain skills a person needs before starting to learn AAC? We used to think that was true. Sometime people don't start AAC because the person lacks some basic skills. The team or family might say; "This person...

- doesn't want to communicate.
- doesn't understand "cause and effect".
- forgets that something exists if it is not visible.
- isn't following directions.
- isn't matching or identifying pictures.
- doesn't look at other people in the eye.

Our thinking has changed. We now know there are no required skills to start AAC. A person can learn many skills at the same time. If we help a person communicate, we help develop the other skills. **AAC can be an important part of a person wanting to communicate.**

AAC can help someone learn cause and effect. Cause and effect is a relationship between events or things. One is the result of the other. One common way to show cause and effect is with a "first-then" statement. First-wash the dishes. Then-watch TV.

Does the person forget that something exists if it is not visible? **AAC can help someone learn object permanence.** Typical learning of this idea happens at the same time a person is learning to communicate.

We can introduce AAC at a young age. AAC can be useful in teaching picture recognition and matching. AAC can help someone learn to follow directions.

AAC is always a choice for an individual without oral language.