

CENTER FOR EXCELLENCE
in Developmental
Disabilities

Freedom to Communicate

All people have the right to:

- Express
- Request
- Be heard
- Reject or refuse
- Be acknowledged
- Interact with dignity

**Augmentative and Alternative
Communication (AAC)**

AAC tools and technologies give
a voice to all through:

- Unaided communication systems that use the person's body:
 - Movement
 - Sign language
 - Gestures
- Aided communication systems that require the use of tools and the person's body:
 - Paper and pencil
 - Picture/photograph systems
 - Computers/electronic devices

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When communicating with an AAC user, remember to:

- **Ask** the person how he or she wants to communicate.
- **Be sincere.** Say you do not understand, if you don't.
- **Speak** directly to the person.
- **Listen.** Silence is golden.
- **Observe.** Watch for all methods of communication. Assume competence.
- **Respond.** The person likely understands you, even if not able to reply.

Not being able to speak does not mean you have nothing to say.

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2825 50th Street
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