

aac goals for functional communication

AAC Goals for Functional Communication: A Comprehensive Guide

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Summary: This guide provides a comprehensive overview of establishing effective AAC goals for functional communication. It addresses best practices, including person-centered planning, assessment strategies, and goal writing techniques. The guide also highlights common pitfalls to avoid, emphasizing the importance of collaborative goal setting and ongoing assessment to ensure successful communication outcomes. Specific examples and practical strategies are provided to support clinicians in developing meaningful and achievable AAC goals that promote functional communication in diverse settings.

1. Understanding Functional Communication and its Relevance to AAC Goals

Functional communication refers to the ability to effectively communicate one's needs, wants, and ideas in real-life situations. Setting aac goals for functional communication means focusing on goals that directly impact an individual's ability to participate meaningfully in their daily life. This is in contrast to solely focusing on technical skills, such as mastering a specific AAC device or vocabulary. For example, an effective aac goal for functional communication might be: "To independently request assistance using

their AAC device during mealtimes in three out of five trials." This goal is functional because it addresses a real-life need and is measurable.

1. Person-Centered Planning: The Foundation of Effective AAC Goals

The cornerstone of successful aac goals for functional communication is person-centered planning. This collaborative process involves the individual using AAC, their family, caregivers, educators, and the speech-language pathologist. It emphasizes understanding the individual's communication strengths, weaknesses, preferences, and priorities. What are their communication needs across different environments (home, school, community)? What are their interests and aspirations? Understanding these aspects allows for the development of personalized aac goals that are both motivating and relevant.

1. Assessment: Informing Effective AAC Goals

Comprehensive assessment is crucial for establishing effective aac goals for functional communication. This assessment should involve multiple methods, including observation in natural settings, standardized assessments of communication skills, and consideration of the individual's cognitive and physical abilities. The assessment process informs the selection of appropriate AAC strategies and devices, and provides the basis for creating realistic and achievable goals.

1. Writing Measurable and Achievable AAC Goals

Well-written aac goals for functional communication follow the SMART framework: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound. For example, instead of a vague goal like "Improve communication," a SMART goal might be: "Independently initiate communication using their AAC device to request a drink during snack time in 4 out of 5 opportunities within one month." This goal clearly defines the behavior (initiating communication), the method (AAC device), the context (snack time), the criteria for success (4 out of 5), and the timeframe (one month).

1. Common Pitfalls to Avoid When Setting AAC Goals

Several common pitfalls can hinder the effectiveness of aac goals for functional communication. These include:

Focusing solely on device skills: Mastering the device is important, but the ultimate goal is functional communication.

Setting goals that are too ambitious or unrealistic: Goals need to be challenging but achievable.

Failing to consider the individual's context and environment: Goals should be relevant to the person's daily life.

Lack of collaboration: Effective goals require input from all relevant stakeholders.

Insufficient monitoring and progress tracking: Regular monitoring is crucial to ensure goals are effective and adjustments can be made.

1. Strategies for Promoting Functional Communication with AAC

Several strategies can facilitate functional communication using AAC:

Environmental modifications: Adapting the environment to support communication.

Communication partner training: Educating communication partners on how to interact effectively with the individual using AAC.

Modeling and prompting: Demonstrating and guiding the individual's communication attempts.

Strategy instruction: Teaching specific communication strategies such as requesting, commenting, and rejecting.

Choice-making opportunities: Providing opportunities for the individual to make choices and express preferences.

1. Integrating AAC Goals Across Settings

Consistency is key. AAC goals should be integrated across all settings – home, school, community – to promote generalization and functional communication in diverse contexts. Collaboration among professionals and caregivers is critical for ensuring this consistency.

1. Ongoing Assessment and Goal Adjustment

The process of setting aac goals for functional communication is iterative. Regular monitoring and assessment are vital to track progress, identify challenges, and adjust goals as needed. This ensures the individual's needs are continually met and progress continues.

1. Celebrating Successes and Maintaining Motivation

Acknowledging and celebrating successes is crucial for maintaining motivation and fostering a positive learning environment. This can involve highlighting achievements, rewarding progress, and providing positive reinforcement.

Conclusion:

Developing effective aac goals for functional communication requires a comprehensive, person-centered approach. By carefully considering the individual's needs, preferences, and context, and by employing the strategies outlined in this guide, clinicians and caregivers can empower individuals to communicate effectively and participate fully in their lives. Collaboration, regular assessment, and a focus on functional outcomes are essential for achieving successful communication outcomes.

FAQs:

1. What is the difference between functional and non-functional AAC goals? Functional goals focus on real-life communication needs, while non-functional goals might emphasize technical skills without considering their impact on daily life.
1. How often should AAC goals be reviewed and adjusted? Goals should be reviewed and adjusted regularly, at least every 3 months, or more frequently as needed based on progress.
1. What if the individual using AAC doesn't seem motivated to use their device? Explore the reasons for lack of motivation. It may be due to the device, the goals, or the communication partners. Adjust the approach to be more motivating.
1. How can I involve family members in the goal-setting process? Schedule meetings with family, involve them in assessment, and encourage their input on priorities and preferences.

1. What are some examples of measurable outcomes for AAC goals? Examples include: "Independently request help using AAC in 80% of opportunities," or "Initiate communication using AAC to share information about a preferred activity in 5 out of 5 opportunities."
1. How can I address challenges with communication partners who are not familiar with AAC? Provide training and education to communication partners on effective strategies for interacting with the individual using AAC.
1. What types of AAC devices are best for achieving functional communication goals? The best device depends on the individual's needs and abilities. A comprehensive assessment is necessary to determine the appropriate device.
1. How can I ensure AAC goals are appropriate for individuals with different cognitive abilities? Tailor the goals to the individual's cognitive abilities and adjust the complexity of the communication tasks accordingly.
1. What resources are available to support the implementation of AAC goals? Numerous resources are available, including professional organizations, online communities, and books dedicated to AAC intervention. Consult with your local AAC team for recommendations.

Related Articles:

1. "Selecting Appropriate AAC Systems Based on Individual Needs": This article explores the various types of AAC systems and how to choose the best fit for individuals with diverse communication needs.
1. "Strategies for Partner-Assisted Communication with AAC Users": This article outlines effective strategies for communication partners to support successful communication with AAC users.

1. "Addressing Challenging Behaviors Associated with AAC Implementation": This article explores common challenges related to AAC use and provides strategies for addressing these.

1. "The Role of Family Involvement in Successful AAC Intervention": This article highlights the importance of family involvement in AAC intervention and provides tips for effective collaboration.

1. "Measuring Outcomes in AAC Intervention: A Practical Guide": This article provides a practical guide on how to measure progress and outcomes in AAC intervention.

1. "Integrating AAC into Educational Settings: A Comprehensive Approach": This article focuses on the integration of AAC into educational settings, providing strategies for success.

1. "AAC for Individuals with Aphasia: Strategies for Functional Communication": This article specifically addresses AAC use for individuals with aphasia.

1. "Developing Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) Goals for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder": This article focuses on developing AAC goals for children with Autism.

1. "Technology-Assisted Communication: Utilizing Apps and Software for AAC": This article explores the use of various apps and software to enhance AAC communication.

and worksheets. It was designed for speech therapists new to adult speech therapy and covers the most common diagnoses and disorders across all adult speech therapy settings, from hospitals, to skilled nursing facilities, to home health. This workbook is packed with over 580 pages of practical, evidenced-based treatment material.

aac goals for functional communication: *Augmentative and Alternative Communication* David R. Beukelman, Pat Mirenda, 2012 The fourth edition of the foundational, widely adopted AAC textbook *Augmentative and Alternative Communication* is the definitive introduction to AAC processes, interventions, and technologies that help people best meet their daily communication needs. Future teachers, SLPs, OTs, PTs, and other professionals will prepare for their work in the field with critical new information on advancing literacy skills; conducting effective, culturally appropriate assessment and intervention; selecting AAC vocabulary tailored to individual needs; using new consumer technologies as affordable, nonstigmatizing communication devices; promoting social competence supporting language learning and development; providing effective support to beginning communicators; planning inclusive education services for students with complex communication needs; and improving the communication of people with specific developmental disabilities and acquired disabilities. An essential core text for tomorrow's professionals--and a key reference for in-service practitioners--this fourth edition prepares readers to support the communicative competence of children and adults with a wide range of complex needs.

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aac goals for functional communication: *Fundamentals of AAC* Nerissa Hall, Jenifer Juengling-Sudkamp, Michelle L. Gutmann, Ellen R. Cohn, 2022-03-11 *Fundamentals of AAC: A Case-Based Approach to Enhancing Communication* is a course-friendly textbook designed to walk readers through the theoretical and clinical underpinnings of assessment, intervention, and consultation for individuals with complex communication needs across the lifespan. Augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) encompasses a variety of communication methods and is used by those with a wide range of speech and language impairments. With a consistent framework and descriptive case studies, as well as input from various stakeholders, readers can gain a comprehensive understanding of the needs of persons who use AAC and how to provide them with ethically and culturally considerate support. Unlike other texts on this topic, this book empowers the reader to visualize AAC in action. Each chapter offers evidence-based information about the topic along with a case study. The case studies combined with short essays from various stakeholders illustrate the variety of ways in which AAC can enhance an individual's connection with their communication partners and community, and the role of the speech-language pathologist as integral to this process. Intended to easily translate into a 6-, 8-, or 13-week semester course, this textbook is divided into seven distinct sections: Section I provides an overview of AAC, no-tech, mid-tech, and high-tech AAC systems, as well as mobile technology and advancing technology. Section II discusses cultural and linguistic responsivity and how this underlies AAC systems and services. Section III reviews AAC assessment, intervention and implementation for toddlers, preschoolers, and school-aged individuals, along with goal-writing and data collection. Section IV covers assessment, intervention, and implementation for young adults and adults needing AAC. Section V offers the reader detailed information and rich examples of the application of AAC for persons with developmental disabilities. Section VI provides the theoretical foundation and exemplar case studies of AAC for persons with acquired disabilities. Section VII details consultation and training for various stakeholders, as well as tele-AAC services. Key Features: * Overviews with key terms set the stage for each section * 36 case studies with questions and visuals to clearly depict each case * Boxes with practical tips and expert advice

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approach to preparing, running and evaluating Smile Therapy, with photocopiable resources.

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aac goals for functional communication: *Assistive Technology and Universal Design for Learning* Kim K. Floyd, Tara Jeffs, Kathleen S. Puckett, Assistive Technology and Universal Design for Learning: Toolkits for Inclusive Instruction is an innovative textbook on instructional and assistive technology. Designed for both undergraduate and graduate teaching programs, student readers can expect to gain a thorough understanding of how assistive technology and UDL can be integrated into educational settings. This text delves into data analytics platforms for analyzing student behavior, learning management systems for facilitating communication, and software emphasizing UDL. Students will learn how to create accessible environments and systems while also focusing on multiple means of representation, engagement, and expression to accommodate all learners. With a developmental focus that supports learners across intellectual, sensory, and motor challenges, this text will serve as a valuable guide on how these technologies can be utilized to effectively transform the classroom and revolutionize education. Key Features: * Infuses assistive technology and UDL * Includes a unique chapter on distance education, behavior, and emerging technologies * Has a developmental focus that supports learners across intellectual, sensory, and motor challenges * Toolkits that include resources, strategies, and instructional methods to equip readers to foster an inclusive classroom environment across content areas * Learning Outcomes at the beginning of each chapter to provide clear direction for navigating the content * Chapter summaries that support understanding of key concepts * Chapter activities that support integrating technology within the curriculum * Glossary with definitions of key terminology use

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aac goals for functional communication: AAC for All Mollie G. Mindel, Jeeva John, 2021-09-10 Within the field of speech language pathology, there is a growing awareness of the need to adapt our services to better serve a diverse population. AAC for All: Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Practices is designed to serve as a resource for practicing speech language pathologists and augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) specialists working with culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) populations. Written in an easily accessible style, this text walks the clinician through the process of supporting this particular population and includes tips and resources for easy implementation. Unlike other books on AAC topics, this book directly focuses on the unique needs of CLD students with complex communication needs. By highlighting important considerations and practical steps rooted in evidence-based practice (EBP), this unique resource ensures the AAC provider is meeting the needs of all their students regardless of their backgrounds. The text encompasses every stage of supporting CLD students and their families along their communication journey, including the clinician's preliminary steps of reflection upon the interplay of culture and language, and differences in attitudes towards disability and AAC. With this understanding, the authors guide the reader through practical, yet culturally responsive assessments and interventions strategies that can be adapted to meet the needs of any student who uses AAC. Key Features: * More than 50 illustrations and graphs to help clarify and expand on key concepts covered throughout the text; enabling readers to more easily understand and apply complex material. * Use of highly readable excerpts throughout the book in the form of Explorations of key terms, Perspectives & Insights describing real life professional experiences from the authors, and TIPS (To Implement Proper Strategies) to guide the reader through practical intervention recommendations. * A clinician-friendly writing style that will have this book repeatedly reached for as it guides the reader through their learning and clinical practice. Disclaimer: Please note that ancillary content (such as documents, audio, and video, etc.) may not be included as published in the original print version of this book.

aac goals for functional communication: Augmentative and Alternative Communication: Engagement and Participation Erna Alant, 2016-12-30 Augmentative and Alternative Communication: Engagement and Participation reexamines the basic components of human communication based on the development of meaning between two people and provides a new theoretical framework for integrating the use of Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) strategies into interpersonal interactions. As such, it is an indispensable resource for speech-language pathologists, special education practitioners, and researchers in AAC, as well as for instructors and graduate students in the fields of speech and hearing sciences and special education. The book employs a creative synthesis of engagement (personal involvement) and participation (exchanges) to describe meaning-making and social closeness between partners. This process allows for the acknowledgment of different levels of shared meaning and outlines a novel approach to assessment and intervention. The book also describes the importance of integrating relational (interaction-oriented) as well as instrumental (goal-oriented) communication functions as essential in maintaining on-going relationships. Most resources in AAC tend to emphasize strategies for enhancing participation, rather than strategies associated with the development of engagement (being with) to enhance communication between communication partners. In contrast, this text uses interactions between users of AAC and their communication partners as a basis to explore the creative synthesis between engagement and participation to provide clinical guidelines for assessment and intervention in both interpersonal and classroom contexts. Key features: A novel theoretical approach focused on engagement and participation as core components in AAC intervention Emphasis on empathic listening skills of both communication partner and user of AAC strategies to facilitate engagement (emotional resonance) between them Guidance for teachers on the benefits of a meaning-based approach to communication in the classroom Application of empathic listening strategies to people with dementia to address an increasing need for care of patients with Alzheimer disease by caregivers and family members Integration of social media and face-to-face interactions as central to developing relationships in AAC interactions

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communication training with AAC. The controversy surrounding facilitated communication. Sign language versus AAC. Aided Augmentative Communication for Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders is an essential resource for clinicians/practitioners, researchers, and graduate students in such fields as child and school psychology, speech pathology, language education, developmental psychology, behavior therapy, and educational technology.

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improve a child's communication, behavior, social and academic skills. Chapters follow a consistent, user-friendly format, answering the questions Who, What, Why, How, Where and When about every technique. This book will be essential reading for anyone looking to improve social interaction between children with pervasive developmental disorders and those around them.

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aac goals for functional communication: *Handbook of Children with Special Health Care Needs* David Hollar, 2012-07-15 Children with chronic conditions, developmental disorders, and birth defects represent a sizeable minority of American children—as many as one in five. Often their families have financial or other issues limiting their access to appropriate care, thus limiting their adult prospects as well. Compounding the problem, many valuable resources concerning this population are difficult to access although they may be critical to the researchers, practitioners, and policymakers creating standards for quality care and services. In response, the *Handbook of Children with Special Health Care Needs* assembles research, applied, and policy perspectives reflecting the range of children's problems requiring special services. Widely studied conditions (e.g., communication disorders, substance abuse) and those receiving lesser attention (e.g., tuberculosis) are covered, as are emerging ideas such as the "medical home" concept of continuity of care. Its interdisciplinary outlook makes the *Handbook of Children with Special Health Care Needs* a vital, forward-looking text for developmental psychologists, pediatricians, early childhood and special education researchers and practitioners, disability researchers, policymakers, and advocates, and providers for children with special health care needs.

aac goals for functional communication: *Cerebral Palsy* Freeman Miller, Steven J. Bachrach, 2006-05-08 When a child has a health problem, parents want answers. But when a child

has cerebral palsy, the answers don't come quickly. A diagnosis of this complex group of chronic conditions affecting movement and coordination is difficult to make and is typically delayed until the child is eighteen months old. Although the condition may be mild or severe, even general predictions about long-term prognosis seldom come before the child's second birthday. Written by a team of experts associated with the Cerebral Palsy Program at the Alfred I. duPont Hospital for Children, this authoritative resource provides parents and families with vital information that can help them cope with uncertainty. Thoroughly updated and revised to incorporate the latest medical advances, the second edition is a comprehensive guide to cerebral palsy. The book is organized into three parts. In the first, the authors describe specific patterns of involvement (hemiplegia, diplegia, quadriplegia), explain the medical and psychosocial implications of these conditions, and tell parents how to be effective advocates for their child. In the second part, the authors provide a wealth of practical advice about caregiving from nutrition to mobility. Part three features an extensive alphabetically arranged encyclopedia that defines and describes medical terms and diagnoses, medical and surgical procedures, and orthopedic and other assistive devices. Also included are lists of resources and recommended reading.

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Intervention and briefly describes each phase of the intervention process. Discusses how AAC assessments differ from traditional assessments of speech and language skills, as well as provides an overview of different assessment models and their contribution to the intervention process. Examines the importance of training support staff to key components of this intervention model. Contains information on the application of language-based intervention strategies to AAC. Talks about the importance of progress monitoring and how to use functional communication measures and communication sampling, a new and innovative technique developed by the author, to monitor progress. Provides example lesson plans and example goals addressing each area of communicative competence. *Disclaimer: Please note that ancillary content (such as documents, audio, and video, etc.) may not be included as published in the original print version of this book.

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for the clinical challenges they will face in their professional careers. Every year, new information, new theories, and new evidence are published about development to explain the complexities that create and facilitate the language acquisition process. The authors who have contributed to this text provide the latest research and perspectives on language development among neurotypical children. This valuable text bridges biological, environmental, technological, and professional venues to advance the development of professionals and children alike. What's new in the Second Edition? • New chapter on syntactic development including morphology • New chapter covering school-age language • New case study highlighting school-age language • Expanded content on morphology including morphological analysis Instructor Resources: PowerPoint Presentations, Test Bank Student Resources: Companion Website Every new copy of the text includes an access code for the companion website. eBook offerings do not include an access code.

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Part II focuses on the unique challenges of providing AAC in childhood, while Part III centers on dealing with adult disorders. In Part IV, the authors delve into special populations and issues, such as assisting individuals with multiple disabilities. In Part V, clinicians will find tips for becoming a solution-oriented provider. Key Features: * Contributions from national experts in AAC * Quotes and vignettes representing the experiences of actual AAC users * Featured challenges faced by providers and users alike * Evidence-based solutions for ready application in clinical contexts * Tools for implementing certain strategies, including example meeting scripts * A comprehensive glossary of terms * A highly readable writing style * An introductory chapter with bolded key terms to improve retention of the material

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a Lot, she was hooked Turned out, that was her gateway into being completely obsessed with reading. --The Huffington Post

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