

What is Assistive Technology for Speech/Communication?

Assistive Technology (AT) devices in this category help people who cannot speak clearly, or who cannot speak at all, when communicating in person or through technology like phones, tablets, and computers. These devices can increase the volume of a person's voice if they cannot speak loudly and when they are around lots of noise. Some devices can speak out loud and show words and messages on phone, tablet, or computer screens. Other AT may help a person hold, carry, or better use the device. All these devices and items are AT for Speech/Communication. Speech/Communication assistive technology is called Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC).

When do I need to use them?

People with speech disabilities communicate all the time across all environments, so a person using AAC will need access to their AAC system/device all the time!

Who needs AAC?

Anyone unable to speak intelligibly, face-to-face or long distance, benefits from AAC. Including, but not limited to, those who

- are born with disabilities affecting their speech -- Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Down syndrome,
- acquired their disabilities -- Traumatic Brain Injury, Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis, Stroke),
- have a temporary need -- Intubation during a medical procedure.



Why do people without speech not use AAC?

Not all speech pathologists are familiar with AAC options or have the required training to match a person with the most appropriate communication tools.

Technology has many advantages, but careful consideration is needed to meet an individual's unmet needs in the community, educational, and employment settings. To learn more about navigating the world of Speech Communication AT, visit [Speech Communication – Explore AT from AT3 Center](#). The assistive technology solutions provided on this site are intended as examples to give an idea of the types of Speech Communication AT currently available in today's market.

Also, remember to [contact your AT Act Program](#) to learn more and explore services available to help make an informed purchasing decision and obtain the AT needed.

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