Creating a Successful Total Language Environment in EarlyYears

or
Getting Going!
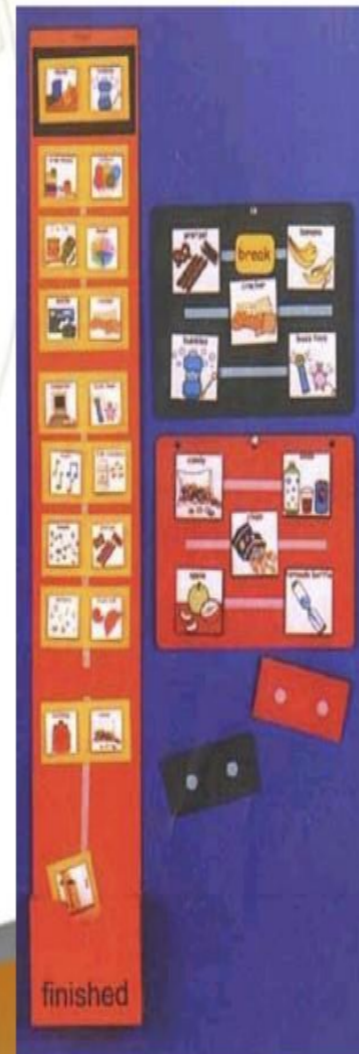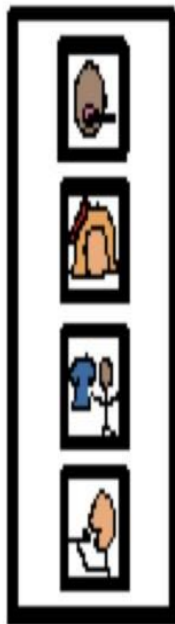
LAUREL ALLEN, SLT
16 JUNE 2016 AAC CEN

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Classroom Picture Schedule

- All classrooms should have a schedule! Schedules help students transition between activities and plan their day! Schedules may be classroom and/or individual student oriented.

picture schedule

Total Communication

▸ **What does it mean to you?**

▸ **Target: receptive vs. expressive?**

▸ **Aided Language-Rich Environment**

A child can be too young for AAC

FALSE

▸   **http://kapcsol-at.hu/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/too-young-for-aac-myth.pdf**

Romski, M. and Sevcik, R. (2005) Augmentative communication and early intervention: Myths and realities. Infants and Young Children, 18(3),174-185.

Myth 1 : AAC is a "last resort" in speech-language intervention.

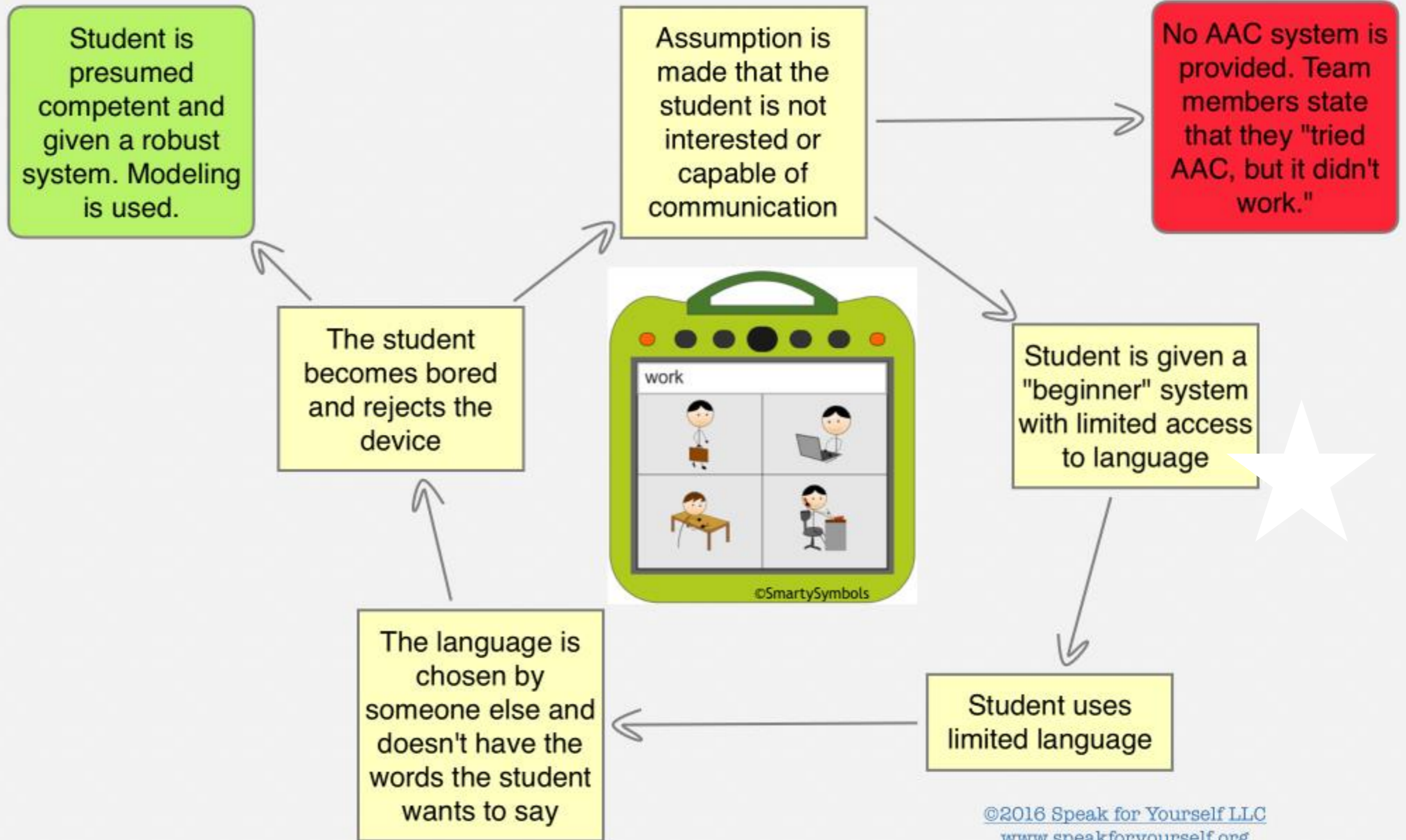**Myth 2 : AAC hinders or stops further speech development.**

Myth 3 : Children must have a certain set of skills to be able to benefit from AAC.

Myth 4 : Speech-generating AAC devices are only for children with intact cognition.

Myth 5 : Children have to be a certain age to be able to benefit from AAC.

Myth 6 : There is a representational hierarchy of symbols from objects to written words (traditional orthography).

The "Beginner" Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) System Catch 22

Student is presumed competent and given a robust system. Modeling is used.

Assumption is made that the student is not interested or capable of communication

No AAC system is provided. Team members state that they "tried AAC, but it didn't work."

The student becomes bored and rejects the device

work

©SmartySymbols

Student is given a "beginner" system with limited access to language

The language is chosen by someone else and doesn't have the words the student wants to say

Student uses limited language

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Mary-Louise Bertram

▸ **http://www.janefarrall.com/why-we-do-aided-language-stimulation-and-you-should-too/**

▸ *"…our AAC learners learn their AAC language. If they cannot read the label, it all 'looks Greek to them'. This means we have to*

▸ *1) use it to talk to them – A LOT and*

▸ *2) let them babble and hear responses to their babbling."*

Lilly gets new words

- **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tmVs8dUFXPY**

Dr Caroline Musselwhite

Presentation on youtube

ALS – make it interactive, make it FUN

www.youtube.com/watch?v=zOr7MO7ZnzM

How much stimulation/modelling?

▸ **The typically developing child will have been exposed to oral language for approximately 4,380 waking hours by the time he begins speaking at about 18 months of age.**

▸ **(Dr. Caroline Musselwhite 's translation:**

   4000-6000 words per day for 1 year before 1st word

   4000-6000 words per day for the 2nd year before 2 words together)

▸ **If someone is using a different symbol set and only has exposure to it two times a week, for 20-30 minutes each, it will take the alternate symbol user 84 years to have the same experience with his symbols that the typically developing child has with the spoken word in 18 months!!!**

   Jane Korsten (2011) QIAT Listserv 4th April http://www.janefarrall.com/aac-systemic-change-for-individual-success/

But How?

▸ **TRAIN the staff – 2 day AAC induction, sign courses**
- weekly practice sessions

▸ **MODEL yourself over and over - YOU are your best teaching tool**

▸ **foster Positive EXPECTATION = Communication Culture**

expectation for all children/students

expectation of staff – with management support

Little Acorns nursery morning hello

Practical Implementations at PACE

▸ **core symbol vocab and objects of reference**

▸ **sign of the week and core vocab, sign display, sign courses**

▸ **Visual timetables**

▸ **PODD book (reduced 12 or 40) per staff member – so there is communication in the hallways & toilet too!**

▸ **class book = + 1 level from highest child**

▸ **whiteboard per class with PODD**

▸ **communication passports and/or brief communication profile**

▸ **story sacks/books with symbols & objects & sensory activities**

▸ **VOCAs around the school – e.g. on book displays, on the receptionist's desk**

Beyond object labelling
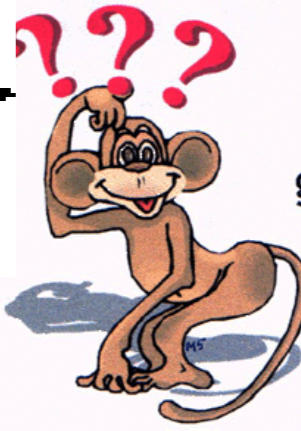
▸

Kitchen/cooking activity board
Ruskis, Helsinki

PrAACtical AAC
Missed implementation opportunities

- http://praacticalaac.org/praactical/how-i-do-it-implementing-aided-language-input-with-alicia-garcia/

So,

- 1. its about us

- 2. multiple communication functions

- 3. what the child finds interesting, useful, meaningful

- 4. match behavioural communication with symbols/pictures

- 5. expand the child's utterance

- 6. pay attention to the child's eyes – follow the child's lead

- 7. at the child's eye level

- 8. acknowledge topic change and follow the child's lead

Questions
are
guaranteed in
life;
Answers
aren't.