

# Augmentative Alternative Communication (AAC)

*Lessons Learned during COVID-19*

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# Remote therapy & evaluations are possible!

## **...with the right supports**

- Tech Savvy caregivers
- Access to high-speed internet/tablet
- Online assessment tools
- Collaboration with other providers
  - home providers (ABA, EI)

## **But not always ideal...**

- Seeing what the child can do independently
- Can't change or modify systems "on the fly"
- More time spent modeling and training parents
- Difficulty collecting data
- Limitations in engagement at times

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# Expanded Access to therapy and learning

- Families able to access assessments and therapy from their remote “bubble”
    - broadened access to AAC to otherwise limited specialists
    - Easier for clinicians to identify gaps in caregiver educational needs
    - Goals more in-tune with real life needs
  - Funding through insurance allowed coverage for teletherapy for the first time = less disruption in services
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Reduced  
access for  
others

Difficulty supporting families through the transitions at home

Sharing devices and internet for school/home/work

Less tech-savvy families, less able to access AAC and online therapy supports

Non-English speaking families – accessing interpreter services more challenging

# Possibilities

- Changing the way therapists support families
  - In person, online, hybrid
  - Synchronous/asynchronous modalities
- Consider policies and funding structures that will support AAC access to all

