

Puedo Comunicarme! A Model for Providing Augmentative and Alternative (AAC) Interventions to Nonverbal Children with ASD from Bilingual Homes

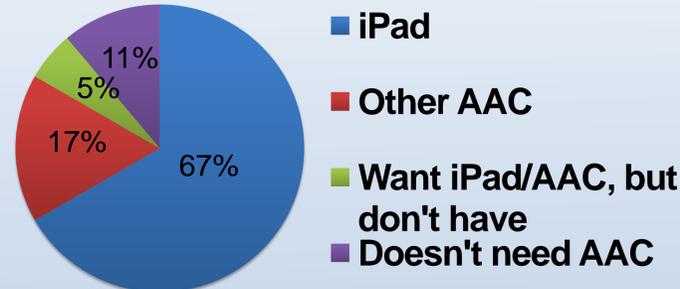
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Introduction

- Benefits of acknowledging the home language during interventions (Soto & Yu, 2014)
- Learning outcomes have less to do with number of languages than conditions in which language is learned (Soto & Yu, 2014)
- iCan Chat provided child-directed interventions, using iPad, with parent coaching to improve the communication of nonverbal children
- A variety of communication apps were used based on the child's needs



Device Usage



- 40% used AAC **only** at school/therapy*
- 60% used AAC across environments*
- Some parents felt like they didn't need to use a device at home:
 - Some parents use signs at home
 - I understand her nonverbal cues

Barriers*

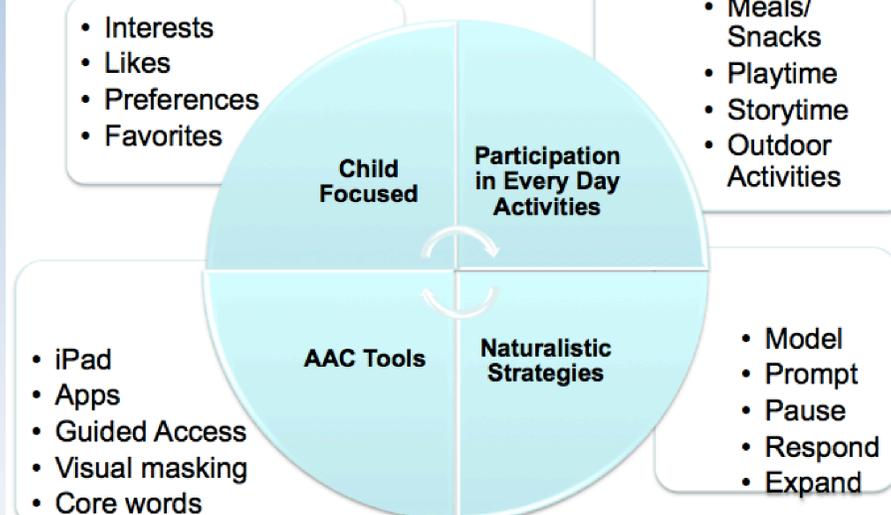


*percentages based on 15 responses

Views on AAC and use of home language

- 58% mothers would like the option of having another language on AAC device
 - Would be helpful for family [members] who don't speak English
 - 42% mothers didn't want another language on the iPad
 - I don't want to confuse him
 - Need to focus on one language... Otherwise too much for my child to understand
 - School and therapies in English
- *based on 12 responses

iCan Chat Model



Fundamental to the iCan Chat model was coaching parents in their home language in English or Spanish.

Who Participated

- 18 out of 28 families completed phone survey
- 61% Hispanic & 19% non-Hispanic
- 61% had a diagnosis of ASD & 19% had another diagnosis
- Ages 2-12 years old
- Range of income levels

References

Soto, G., Yu, B. (2014) Considerations for the Provision of Services to Bilingual Children Who Use Augmentative and Alternative Communication. *Augmentative and Alternative Communication*, 2014; 30(1): 83-92

Perceived Benefits

- More portable than other AAC devices
- Helps with literacy (e.g., spelling)
- Helps with behavior:
 - When he is upset and can't say what he wants, the iPad calms him down because he can express his needs

Conclusions

- Increase in families of diverse backgrounds → need to better understand how to use technology in culturally, linguistically, and developmentally appropriate ways
- Barrier that AAC devices do not support the home language
- More education and research regarding exposure to two languages in children with ASD who use AAC