

Teaching caregivers about other ways of communicating

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Other ways of communicating

Some children cannot speak, they need other ways of communicating. We call these ways “augmentative and alternative communication” or AAC. Here are some examples of AAC:

- using hand signs
- pointing to pictures
- using a ‘talking machine’ that speaks a message when you press a button



Why did we do this study?

Many children with disabilities in South Africa are not in school. They are looked after in care centres. Caregivers in the centres need to help the children communicate. They need to learn about AAC.

This study wanted to find out:

- if the caregivers could learn 5 ways to use AAC
- how the caregivers felt about using AAC
- how the caregivers felt about the training

How did we do this study?

29 caregivers from care centres had 5 days of training about AAC. They learned about the following:

- choosing activities that help children learn
- giving children choices
- pointing to pictures
- using hand signs
- using a talking machine

The study looked at whether the training helped the caregivers know more about AAC.



What did we find?

Caregivers can learn ways to use AAC. Some caregivers could use AAC at their centres. Caregivers felt happy to use AAC after the training. The caregivers felt happy with the training.

What does this mean?

This tells us that training can help caregivers to communicate better with children in their centres. This will help children with disabilities.



What can we do to help?

Encourage caregivers to be trained in AAC. Train caregivers in AAC. This will help children with disabilities in their care to communicate.