

## **Alternative and Augmentative Communication (AAC) Surveys**

Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) is a range of strategies and tools to help people who struggle with speech, language and communication. For example, the use of pictures or symbols, gestures, signing or sophisticated computer-based systems. AAC helps someone to communicate as effectively as possible, in as many situations as possible.

Commissioners across the STP recognise that everyone has *the potential* to communicate. Whether a person *is able* to communicate is influenced by whether their communication abilities and preferences are accepted and supported in the environment, and whether they have access to the services they require to achieve their communication potential.

Representatives from health, social care and education in addition to parents and carers are collectively:

1. Reviewing the current AAC pathway for every child/young person within Devon STP.
2. Ascertaining and reflecting upon experiences of parents/carers/professionals and children/young people in relation to current pathway
3. Reviewing the support available to enable AAC users to access and contribute to the curriculum.
4. Identifying the potential missed opportunities that could impact on a child's/young person's access to AAC and consider if these can be built into our wider system.
5. Promoting the pathway so that it is transparent and understood across the whole system.

Many thanks to everyone who took part in the recent AAC surveys. At present the surveys are being analysed by a senior lecturer at Exeter University. In March a multiagency group of professionals from across Devon, Plymouth and Torbay will be meeting with parents and carers to discuss the findings and to identify key recommendations.

If you would like to find out more about AAC please visit:

[https://www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk/media/620548/aac\\_final.pdf](https://www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk/media/620548/aac_final.pdf)

<https://communicationmatters.org.uk/overview/>