



Newport-Mesa

Unified School District

Community Advisory Committee (CAC) Parent Meeting

Special Education Administrative Team



Sara Jocham, Ed.D
Assistant Superintendent,
Special Services



Elsie Briseño Simonovski, Ph.D
Administrative Director I,
Special Education



Juliana Sauvao, M.A.
Director, Special Education
Resolution/SELPA

Special Education Coordinators



Elke Day,
Preschool Coordinator,
Special Education



Heather Cash, Ph.D.
Elementary Coordinator,
Special Education



Amy Nagy, Ph.D
Elementary Coordinator,
Special Education



Clara Valdez
Elementary Coordinator,
Special Education



Mike Tincup, Ph.D.
Elementary Coordinator,
Special Education



Kim Doyle,
Secondary Coordinator,
Special Education



Samantha Eggen-Garcia
Secondary Coordinator,
Special Education

Agenda

1. LCAP Feedback
2. Presentation
3. Questions and Comments

Communication and Language



Dixie Borys

District Support Speech and Language
Pathologist

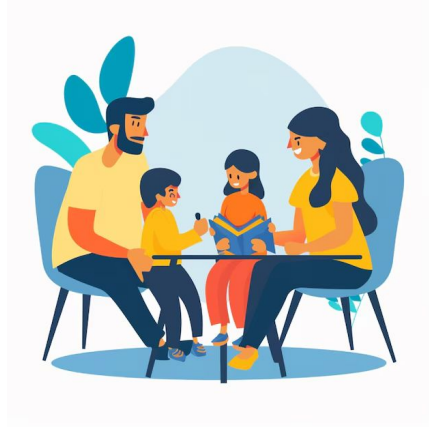


Luke Padgett

Speech and Language Pathologist

Play, Talk, Connect: Supporting Communication at Home

Why Communication at Home Matters



- Strengthens language skills through consistent word use.
- Builds emotional connections to help express needs and feelings.
- Encourages cognitive growth with thinking, problem-solving, and social interaction.
- Boosts confidence by improving self-expression.
- Fosters better academic outcomes through strong communication skills.

AAC Users

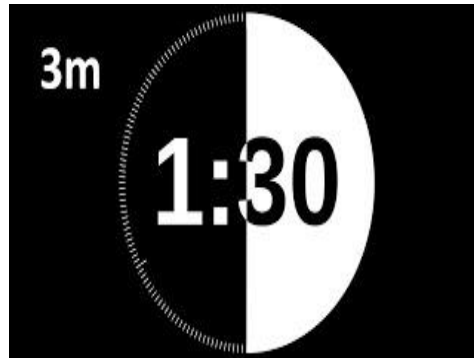
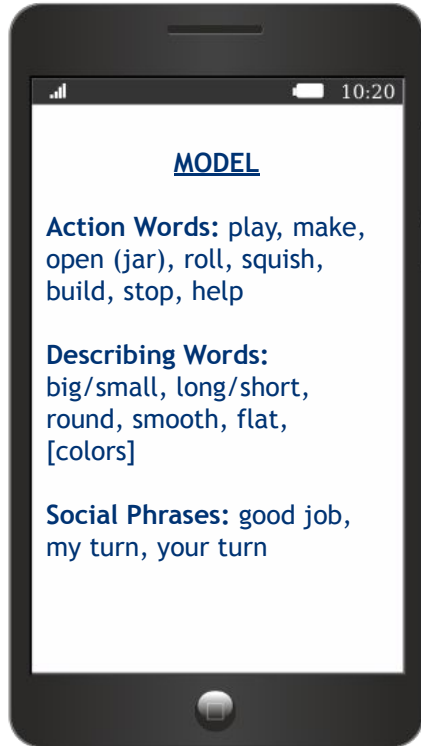
- The method has changed, but the message is still there.
- AAC is meant to scaffold spoken language, not replace it—it provides support to help build communication skills.
- When modeling AAC, focus on everyday words like common verbs, pronouns, and prepositions to help grow vocabulary.
- Stay connected with your child's case carrier to understand how AAC is used at school, so you can help carry those skills over at home.



Play for Any Age - Primary

Toy	Pretend Play	Tech
- Playing with household toys promotes language development. - For example, race toy cars around the room with your child and narrate as you play. AAC: Model words like "go" and "stop" on the device while pushing the car	- Dressing up for pretend play encourages creative thinking and language growth. - For example, as you dress up remember to talk about your different outfits and characters. AAC: Describe your child's outfit using descriptive words (e.g., "Spiderman" + "red")	Vooks: Vooks.com (and its app) provides kids with a safe, ad-free platform where stories come to life through engaging animations, helping to build a love for reading.

Lets Try!



Play for Any Age - Middle

Games	Entertainment	Tech
Family game nights help to strengthen communication through teamwork, critical thinking, and verbal interaction. - Charades helps to build non-verbal communication skills. - Guess Who helps to build question asking skills. AAC: Model social phrases like “<i>your turn</i>” or “<i>good game</i>” while playing	- Layer language on top of your child’s favorite shows or movies. - Ask them about how different characters feel and why, along with other open ended questions. - Perspective taking is important for development of social language.	The Heads Up! app is a fun word-guessing game where players hold their phone to their forehead while others give clues to help them guess the word before time runs out. AAC: Play the Heads Up! board game starting without the timer component to reduce pressure on the AAC User

Play for Any Age - Upper

Game	Activity	Tech
Playing Pictionary with your child encourages; - creative thinking - descriptive language - vocabulary - collaboration AAC: Model words like "draw," "guess," "help," and "more"	Exploring Escape Rooms as a family; - encourages clear expression of ideas and active listening - promotes collaboration - fosters problem-solving and strategic thinking AAC: Model words like "solve," "help," "go," and "team"	Libby is a free app that lets you borrow ebooks, audiobooks, and magazines from your local library using a library card. - Try listening to audiobooks on a long drive as a family (e.g. Harry Potter). - If your child has trouble sleeping, put an audiobook on to reduce boredom and improve literacy.

Additional Tips

- Help younger children learn the sound patterns of words. You can play rhyming games and point out letters as you read.
- Have your child retell stories and talk about their day using open-ended questions.
- Talk to your child about your day, using sequencing words like first, next, and last.
- Ask your child what they think about what they hear or read. Connect what they read to events in their life.
- Talk out loud as you help your child solve problems.

Questions?



25/26 CAC Meeting Dates

- September 25, 2025
- November 20, 2025
- January 29, 2026
- April 23, 2026

Locations: TBD