

# Prompts and Cues with AAC



This resource was produced by Indigo therapists with funding received from Telethon 2021

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*At all times, we want to be supporting individuals to communicate their own message instead of someone else's.*

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## Aim

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**We are:**

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- *Highlight a communication opportunity*
  - *Provide ideas of things to say and ideas on how to say it*
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**We are not:**

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- *Prompting specific messages*
  - *Prompting specific methods of communication*
  - *Needing or demanding a response*
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## Before providing cues

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### ***Model without expectation across all environments:***

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- *Make different messages or conversational turns the individual might make*
    - *Use tools and strategies the individual can use later*
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### ***Talk about communication:***

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- *Look for communication in any form*
    - *Each method chosen by an individual should be valued and respected*
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## Motivate



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Have something to talk about.

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- ***Engage*** the individual in situations which are motivating and engaging.
    - *Remind yourself of the **goal and purpose**:*
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- Encouraging self-initiated communication and highlighting communication opportunities.
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- *Model without expectations across all environments.*
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## Initiation



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Look for clues that they have something to say!

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- *Be on the **lookout** for communication in any form.*
  - ***Look for** anything that might show the individual has something to say.*
  - ***Respond** naturally to these initiations as meaningful.*
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## Indirect Cues



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Space for participation.

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- ***Time delay***
  - *After you've responded to them, pause in a way that invites their participation.*
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- ***Gesture / Environment / Visual***
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- Highlight a communication system as a possible option that might help – give it a nudge, shine a light...
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- *Verbal*

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- This might involve a repetition of the original comment.
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## Direct Cue



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Show examples of possible messages.

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- *Verbal*

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- Provide encouragement to take a turn: “I wonder if you’ve got something to say”.
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- *Gesture / Environment / Visual*

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- Give feedback about intelligibility or specificity: “Is another way you could tell me”.
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- *Non-directive model*

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- Model a possible contribution based on observations.
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*Any model should offer a way to improve the intelligibility or specificity of the original attempt*

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Wait



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After each thing you do or say.

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- **Longer** than you might normally – this could be up to 10 seconds or more.
    - Give the individual **space and time** to contribute.
    - It is ok if they **don't communicate** with you.
    - It's ok if they say **something unexpected**.
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Rethinking hand-over-hand prompting

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### ***What is hand-over-hand prompting***

*Hand-over-hand involves someone moving the hands of others.*

*It is used as a way to get individuals to participate or complete tasks including, but not limited to, communication.*

### ***The risks***

*People with disabilities are significantly more at risk of experiencing all types of violence.*

*Women with disabilities are more likely to experience sexual and partner violence, and men are more likely to experience physical violence.*

*Those who cannot rely on their speech can be perceived as “easy targets” for abuse.*

### ***As a teaching tool***

*Research and anecdotes from AAC users, suggests that modelling is better for effectively teaching a skill than physical prompting.*

*People have the right to control their own bodies.*

*A physical cue teaches someone that other people are allowed to manipulate their bodies or get them to ‘say’ things.*

### ***Autonomy***

*Autonomy and independence are taught through the actions of others when bodily autonomy is respected, and communication in all forms is valued.*

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- *Prioritise autonomy over compliance, by modelling consent to AAC users.*
  - *Prioritise independence over dependence, by asking permission before touching their device, their body, or any sort of hands on support.*
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Hand over hand  
prompting



The risks



Teaching tool



Autonomy

## For more information

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For more information visit our website: *Telethon: Country Kids Communicate* ([indigosolutions.org.au](http://indigosolutions.org.au))<sup>1</sup>

Download this as a PDF document: *Prompts and Cues with AAC*<sup>2</sup>

 **Phone:** 08 9381 0600

 **Web:** [www.indigosolutions.org.au](http://www.indigosolutions.org.au)

 **Email:** [help@indigosolution.org.au](mailto:help@indigosolution.org.au)<sup>3</sup>

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## References

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<sup>1</sup><https://www.indigosolutions.org.au/our-services/services-for-schools/telethon-country-kids-communicate>

<sup>2</sup>[https://www.indigosolutions.org.au/docs/default-source/telethon-resource-sheets/11\\_promptsandcues.pdf](https://www.indigosolutions.org.au/docs/default-source/telethon-resource-sheets/11_promptsandcues.pdf)

<sup>3</sup><mailto:help@indigosolution.org.au>



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