



Welcome! I'm Danielle, creator of BRIDGE Communication apps and an SLP + 21 year veteran in augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) and Speech-Language Pathology (SLP). My opinions are derived from evidenced based practice. The results are real and the progress is remarkable.

The Communication Beat

A blog about communication supports, why we need them, ways to use them everyday, and how we succeed.

Communication supports are everyday needs.

What is AAC? Simply put, augmentative and alternative communication means all of the ways that someone communicates besides talking (<https://www.asha.org/public/speech/disorders/aac/>).

Communication is the sending, receiving, and/or exchanging of information. Effective communicators need to be able to both send *and* receive information. Effectively and efficiently.

AAC supports communication and learners' needs. Everyday.

Communication supports and their goals and purpose vary based on need. Learners also vary their styles based on need. Without communication, we cannot learn. Communication is vital to learning. Supporting communication is vital to efficiently intaking and retaining information. Multimodal learning using various auditory, visual, and tactile means strengthens synapses. Stronger synapses increase memory. Longer-term memory produces greater retention of skills. And retention of skills supports knowledge.

Supporting communication supports knowledge.

It's a common need for communication supports to not overwhelm the visual field. To not create stress responses. To not create labor between the communication partners. These communication supports are accepted and craved by individuals. If an individual is craving supports, they remain engaged with those supports. And engagement is the foundation for development. Of any kind.

Communication supports should be versatile, “strongly formed or constructed” (Merriam-Websters definition of *robust*), involve the varied parts of speech and ability to expand language, and have access to varied amounts of pre-programmed significant high frequency vocabulary. We find that giving access to engaging and concise communication supports that people **want to use** helps them want to learn more, which provides practice opportunities.

Lessons.

Development of speech and language is predictable. But emersion through engagement, whether it's language emersion or emersion into yoga or cooking or gardening or skiing, stimulates growth and development of skills. Any skills. Focus where you are and grow.



In conclusion:

Using communication supports to BRIDGE teachers and learners of all kinds will also support connection. Supporting connections, however you can or choose to do it, reduces stress and anxiety. Connections increase chemical reactions in the brain that allow communication to naturally occur. Conversely, stress will produce chemical reactions in the brain that block communication and connection, as well as speech and language learning. Use what low stress resources work for you! There is no wrong way to keep learning. Life lessons. Helping others helps others. Pass it on.

See ya next time!

