

Levels of Prompting

Most Invasive

Least Invasive

VERBAL	FULL PHYSICAL	PARTIAL PHYSICAL	MODEL	GESTURE	VISUAL
A step-by-step narration is given to the student in order for the task / directions to be completed	An adult offers hand-over-hand manipulation of the student to control / direct motor movements	An adult moves a student's body in the direction he needs to go or towards the targeted object	An adult or another student demonstrates the task / direction that is requested of the student	An adult points or makes an action to indicate the next step of a task / direction	An adult points to a visual or an object that is the next step of the task / direction

Dependent

Independent

Levels of Prompting

~From Most to Least Prompting~

Full Physical Assistance:

Hand-Under-Hand support to complete a task

Partial Physical Assistance:

Provide minimal supported guidance

Modeling:

Show the child what you want them to do

Direct Verbal:

Tell the child what they are expected to do or say

Indirect

(verbal or nonverbal):
Look at something or say "now what?"

Gesture:

Indicate with a motion (like pointing) what you want them to do

Independent:

Performed on their own with no cues or prompts!
(This is the goal!)

AAC Prompting Hierarchy ~From Most to Least Prompting~

1

Expectant Pause

Give the user time to respond or the opportunity to initiate communication.

2

Indirect Nonverbal Prompt

Use your body language to indicate to the user that something is expected (e.g. expectant facial expression, questioning hand motion with a shrug, etc.)

3

Indirect Verbal Prompt

Use an open-ended question that tells the user that something is expected but nothing too specific (e.g. "Now what?", "What should we do next?")

4

Request a Response

If there is still no response, you can try to direct the child more specifically (e.g. "Tell me what you want." "You need to ask me.").

5

Gestural Cue

You can point to the symbol or leave/tap your finger there for several seconds to get the user started with his message.

6

Partial Verbal Prompt

If there is still not a response, give them part of the expected response (e.g. "You went to the...").

7

Direct Model

If still no response, model on the person's device (e.g. "The bear is sad.") Pause and wait for the user to imitate or respond.

8

Physical Assistant

Provide hand-over-hand assistance to help the user to form the message using their device.

PROMPT HIERARCHY

ALWAYS USE AIDED LANGUAGE STIMULATION

(aka: Modeling, Aided Language Input, Partner Augmented Input) intensively, across all environments. This is the umbrella under which all AAC learning happens.



CREATE MOTIVATION - Create circumstances which are highly engaging and make communicating more likely. Be a motivating communication partner.



INVITING/EXPECTANT PAUSE - Pause and wait for the individual to respond. Consider using a clock to ensure you are waiting long enough. Some individual need just a few seconds, others need much longer. For individuals with anxiety, an inviting, distracted pause may be more effective.



INDIRECT VISUAL CUE - Use a gesture, point a light at, move the communication system closer or otherwise help the individual direct attention to communicating a message. Use an inviting, expectant pause.

DIRECT VISUAL CUE - Directly point at or otherwise indicate possible messages the individual may want to use. Use an inviting expectant pause.



INDIRECT VERBAL CUE - Give a hint, use a partial verbal cue such as phonemic cue or unfinished sentence. Ask what they think. Use an inviting, expectant pause.



DIRECT VERBAL CUE - Directly tell the individual possible messages they might want to share. "I wonder if you think it's..." Use an inviting, expectant pause.



NON-DIRECTIVE MODEL - Tell the individual something like "Some people might say..." or "I think it's..." and then model some possible messages. Use an inviting, expectant pause.



INCREASE MOTIVATION & RE-EXPOSE TO TARGET VOCABULARY - Communication is always a choice, which means that it is ok if the individual does not communicate or say something other than what you were expecting. When this happens, increase motivation and re-expose to target vocabulary. Avoid physical prompts as these remove the choice and increase risk of physical and sexual abuse by grooming compliance behaviors.