



# **THE ULTIMATE AAC GUIDE FOR PARENTS: FINDING AND USING THE RIGHT FREE & PAID DEVICES**

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## Free AAC Apps and Devices

### CoughDrop (Free Version)

- **What It Is:** A cloud-based AAC communication app with symbols that can be customized for individual needs.
- **How to Use:**
  - **Step 1:** Download the app on a smartphone, tablet, or computer.
  - **Step 2:** Create an account for your child.
  - **Step 3:** Start by exploring the built-in symbol-based communication boards.
  - **Step 4:** Customize boards by adding pictures, words, or phrases relevant to your child's environment.
  - **Step 5:** Practice using the app during daily routines, like asking for a snack or labeling objects in the house.

**How to use:**

### CoughDrop (Free Version)

**What It Is:** A cloud-based AAC communication app with customizable symbols for individual needs.

**How to Use:**

1. **Download the App:** Available for smartphones, tablets, or computers. Install it on your preferred device.
2. **Create an Account:** Set up a user profile for your child using an email address.
3. **Explore Built-In Communication Boards:** Start with the pre-set symbol-based boards. These include basic categories like "Food," "Feelings," and "People."
4. **Add/Remove Icons:**
  - **To Add Icons:**
    - a. Go to the "Boards" section and select the communication board you want to edit.
    - b. Tap the "Edit" button.
    - c. Click "+Add Button" to upload new images or symbols. You can take a picture, upload one from your gallery, or use the app's built-in library.
    - d. Type the label for the symbol (e.g., "Snack" or "Play").
    - e. Save changes and ensure it appears on the board.
  - **To Remove Icons:**
    - a. Open the board you want to edit.
    - b. Click "Edit" and then tap on the icon you want to delete.
    - c. Select "Remove" to take it off the board.
5. **Programming the App:**
  - Customize buttons by adding pre-recorded speech.
  - You can assign phrases or sounds to each icon (e.g., when your child taps "Water," the device says "I want water.").
  - Tap the icon, choose "Add Sound," and either record your voice or select a pre-loaded sound.

**Practice Using in Routines:** Start during common routines, like requesting a snack, and encourage your child to touch the correct symbols to communicate.

## Avaz AAC Lite

- **What It Is:** A symbol-based AAC app designed to help children with communication delays express themselves. The free version offers basic communication tools.
- **How to Use:**
  - **Step 1:** Download the free version from your app store.
  - **Step 2:** Explore pre-made communication boards with symbols.
  - **Step 3:** Begin by using basic symbols to communicate needs (e.g., "I want," "Food").
  - **Step 4:** Add words or personal items by uploading pictures from your gallery or using the app's image search.
  - **Step 5:** Gradually introduce more complex sentences as your child becomes comfortable.

### How to use:

#### Avaz AAC Lite (Free Version)

**What It Is:** A symbol-based AAC app designed to help children express themselves.

#### How to Use:

1. **Download from App Store:** Install the free version.
2. **Explore Pre-Made Boards:** The app includes basic communication boards with everyday phrases like "I want" or "Food."
3. **Add/Remove Icons:**
  - **To Add Icons:**
    - a. Select a communication board to modify.
    - b. Tap "Edit Board" and click "+Add Icon."
    - c. Add symbols by choosing from the app's built-in images or uploading your own photos.
    - d. Type the label for the icon and assign a word or phrase to it (e.g., "Toy").
  - **To Remove Icons:**
    - a. Tap "Edit Board."
    - b. Select the icon you want to remove, then tap "Delete."
4. **Programming the App:** You can customize sounds or words linked to each symbol. Tap the icon, select "Record Sound," and say the word or phrase yourself.

**Daily Use:** Begin by using simple symbols, then gradually introduce more complex phrases (e.g., "I want to play"). Encourage the child to explore and use the app in real-life scenarios.

## LetMeTalk

- **What It Is:** A free text-to-speech AAC app that uses images to help non-verbal children communicate.
- **How to Use:**
  - **Step 1:** Download from the app store and open the app.
  - **Step 2:** Browse through the library of symbols and images.
  - **Step 3:** Choose simple images and phrases, such as “I want juice” or “I’m tired.”
  - **Step 4:** Start with daily routines to build familiarity with the app.
  - **Step 5:** Encourage your child to select the images to communicate needs independently.

**What It Is:** A free text-to-speech app with image-based communication.

**How to Use:**

1. **Download and Open:** Find it in your app store, install, and start browsing the symbol library.
2. **Add/Remove Icons:**
  - **To Add Icons:**
    - a. In the library, tap “+Add Icon.”
    - b. Choose a picture from your gallery or select one from the app’s library.
    - c. Label the icon with words or phrases.
  - **To Remove Icons:**
    - a. Hold down on the icon.
    - b. Select “Delete.”
3. **Programming the App:** You can assign sounds to each icon or record your own voice to give the app a personal touch.

**Practice in Routines:** Start with basic symbols like “I want juice” and encourage the child to independently select images during familiar activities like snack time.

## **SoundingBoard**

- **What It Is:** A free AAC app that turns an iPad or iPhone into a speech-generating device with customizable boards.
- **How to Use:**
  - **Step 1:** Download and install the app.
  - **Step 2:** Choose from pre-made boards or create your own using pictures of familiar items.
  - **Step 3:** Assign words or phrases to images so your child can tap and hear the speech output.
  - **Step 4:** Practice during playtime, meals, or other natural settings to increase comfort with the app.

**How to use:**

**What It Is:** An app that turns your device into a speech-generating device with customizable boards.

**How to Use:**

1. **Download and Install:** Available for iPad or iPhone.
2. **Add/Remove Icons:**
  - **To Add Icons:**
    - a. Open a board and tap “Edit.”
    - b. Click “+Add Button.”
    - c. Use your phone’s camera to upload personal images or select one from the app’s library.
    - d. Assign a word or phrase to the image and save.
  - **To Remove Icons:**
    - a. In “Edit Mode,” select the icon you want to remove and click “Delete.”
3. **Programming:** Record personalized speech for each icon. You can record directly into the app using your phone’s microphone.

**Daily Use:** Encourage the use of the app during everyday routines (e.g., choosing a toy during playtime).

## **Paid AAC Apps and Devices**

### **1. Proloquo2Go**

- **What It Is:** A popular, highly customizable AAC app for non-verbal children and individuals with autism.
- **Cost:** Approx. \$249.99 (one-time purchase)
- **How to Use:**
  - **Step 1:** Purchase and download the app.
  - **Step 2:** Set up user profiles and tailor communication boards with personal photos and words.
  - **Step 3:** Start with the pre-built boards or create custom boards specific to your child's needs (e.g., mealtime words, favorite toys).
  - **Step 4:** Incorporate the device during natural conversations, such as using it to choose what to eat or what activity to do.
  - **Step 5:** Practice frequently and encourage your child to use it in real-life scenarios.

**What It Is:** A widely used, customizable AAC app for non-verbal children.

**Cost:** Approx. \$249.99

**How to Use:**

- 1. Download and Install:** Purchase the app from the app store.
- 2. Add/Remove Icons:**
  - **To Add Icons:**
    - a. In the user profile, open a communication board.
    - b. Tap "Edit," then "Add Button."
    - c. Upload personal photos or use images from the app's library.
    - d. Assign a label and sound to the new icon.
  - **To Remove Icons:**
    - a. In "Edit" mode, select the icon and tap "Delete."
- 3. Programming:** Customize boards by adding personalized vocabulary and recorded phrases.

**Use in Daily Routines:** Implement the app in common conversations, such as letting your child choose snacks or activities.

## **SLAMP Words for Life**

- **What It Is:** Designed for children with autism, this AAC app focuses on language acquisition through motor planning.
- **Cost:** Approx. \$299.99 (one-time purchase)
- **How to Use:**
  - **Step 1:** Purchase and install the app.
  - **Step 2:** Explore core vocabulary words on the app.
  - **Step 3:** Teach your child to select words using consistent motor patterns.
  - **Step 4:** Use the device in daily routines, like snack time, to reinforce specific words.
  - **Step 5:** Gradually increase the number of words and phrases used as the child becomes more proficient.

## **LAMP Words for Life**

**What It Is:** An AAC app focusing on language acquisition through motor planning.

**Cost:** Approx. \$299.99

**How to Use:**

1. **Purchase and Download:**
2. **Add/Remove Icons:**
  - **To Add Icons:**
    - a. Select a board, click “Edit,” and tap “Add Button.”
    - b. Add symbols or photos that are relevant to your child’s needs.
  - **To Remove Icons:**
    - a. Select the icon, hold down, and tap “Delete.”
3. **Programming:** Assign core words to symbols and use consistent motor patterns to help your child learn the system.

**Daily Use:** Integrate during snack time or playtime to reinforce core vocabulary.

## 1. TouchChat

- **What It Is:** A versatile AAC app designed for children with limited verbal abilities. Includes different vocabularies for varying communication levels.
- **Cost:** Approx. \$299.99 (one-time purchase)
- **How to Use:**
  - **Step 1:** Download and install the app.
  - **Step 2:** Choose the appropriate communication vocabulary for your child's needs.
  - **Step 3:** Start by selecting simple phrases or words and using them in daily conversations.
  - **Step 4:** Customize the app by adding pictures and words that your child frequently encounters.
  - **Step 5:** Encourage consistent use by integrating it into daily routines like asking for toys, making requests, or labeling objects.

**What It Is:** A versatile AAC app that supports different levels of communication.

**Cost:** Approx. \$299.99

**How to Use:**

1. **Download and Set Up:**

2. **Add/Remove Icons:**

- **To Add Icons:**
  - a. Open a board, tap "Edit," then "Add."
  - b. Select images or upload your own.
  - c. Assign a word or phrase and sound.
- **To Remove Icons:**
  - a. Click on the icon and choose "Delete."

3. **Programming:** Set up custom vocabularies for different communication needs.

**Daily Practice:** Use it during routine conversations like asking for toys or labeling objects.

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## 1. GoTalk NOW

- **What It Is:** An AAC app that offers both symbol-based and text-based communication for various ability levels.
- **Cost:** Approx. \$79.99 (one-time purchase)
- **How to Use:**
  - **Step 1:** Purchase and download the app.
  - **Step 2:** Explore the range of customizable communication boards.
  - **Step 3:** Start by using a few core vocabulary words, such as “yes,” “no,” or “help.”
  - **Step 4:** Customize boards with familiar pictures and introduce them during daily activities.
  - **Step 5:** Gradually introduce more complex boards and phrases as your child becomes comfortable.

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4. **What It Is:** Offers both symbol-based and text-based communication.

5. **Cost:** Approx. \$79.99

6. **How to Use:**

7. **Purchase and Download:**

8. **Add/Remove Icons:**

9. **To Add Icons:**

10. a. Open a board and tap “+Add Button.”

11. b. Upload images or use the app’s symbols.

12. **To Remove Icons:**

13. a. Hold down the icon and tap “Delete.”

14. **Programming:** Customize boards with pictures and words.

15. **Use During Routines:** Start with basic words like “Yes” and “No,” then expand vocabulary.

## 1. Tobii Dynavox Speech Generating Devices (SGDs)

- **What It Is:** A high-tech, eye-tracking or touch-based communication device designed for non-verbal users.
- **Cost:** Varies, typically starting around \$6,000+ (may be covered by insurance)
- **How to Use:**
  - **Step 1:** Work with a speech therapist to acquire the device and set it up.
  - **Step 2:** Start by setting up basic communication phrases and familiar images.
  - **Step 3:** Teach your child to select words using either eye gaze or touch to communicate.
  - **Step 4:** Use it in natural settings to encourage daily communication, such as asking for food or choosing an activity.
  - **Step 5:** Monitor your child's progress and adjust boards as needed to include more vocabulary and phrases.

### **Tobii Dynavox Speech Generating Devices (SGDs)**

**What It Is:** High-tech devices for non-verbal communication using eye-tracking or touch.

**Cost:** \$6,000+ (insurance may cover).

**How to Use:**

1. **Acquire Through a Speech Therapist:** Set up with a professional.
2. **Add/Remove Icons:** Work with a therapist to create or delete buttons with images and phrases.
3. **Programming:** Eye-tracking or touch can be programmed to select icons, helping the child communicate independently.
4. **Practice in Real-Life Settings:** Use during meals or play to increase familiarity with the device.

### **1. General AAC Tips**

- 2. Start Simple:** Begin with core words and phrases that are meaningful to your child, such as “more,” “help,” or “want.”
- 3. Integrate into Daily Routines:** Use AAC devices during common activities like meals, playtime, or bedtime to encourage regular use.
- 4. Model the Behavior:** Show your child how to use the device by modeling phrases or words yourself during interactions.
- 5. Be Consistent:** Consistent practice and patience are key to successful AAC use.
- 6. Collaborate with Professionals:** Work closely with your child’s speech therapist or AAC specialist to create personalized communication boards and strategies.

**Celebrate Progress:** Recognize every effort your child makes to communicate, even if it’s just tapping one word at first.