



## DCDSB Understanding & Supporting All Learners

### Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC)

#### Core Communication Boards



#### What is “Core” Language/Vocabulary:

- Words that make up most of what we say in everyday conversation
- Consists of people, things, actions, locations and descriptive words

#### “Core” vs “Fringe” Vocabulary:

Core	Fringe
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 80% of the vocabulary that we use</li> <li>• Abstract words (e.g. pronouns, action words, location words) that are difficult to represent in pictures</li> <li>• Frequently used in everyday conversations across various situations (i.e. easy to generalize)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 20% of the vocabulary that we use</li> <li>• Usually people/objects and easily depicted in pictures</li> <li>• Used to communicate very specific messages</li> <li>• Activity specific (and therefore each individual word is not used as often as core vocabulary)</li> </ul>

#### Teaching through Modelling:

- A child can learn how to use a Core board by watching you model how to use it in real conversations and interactions throughout the day
- Children need to see a symbol (or symbol combination) modelled many times (e.g., 50-125 times) before they will use it spontaneously/independently
- The following video demonstrates the importance of modelling a child’s Core board o **Video:** <https://youtu.be/fIFNMky22-U>

#### How to Model a Core Board:

- Model by pointing to pictures that represent what you are saying during different activities and environments throughout your day - keep it natural

- Model different functions (i.e., reasons) of communication (e.g., requesting, describing, commenting, asking & answering questions)
- Model to your child’s current level o For example, if your child is not yet using their Core board to communicate single words, start by modelling one word out of the sentence you say (e.g. “I want goldfish” – point to ‘want’). Once your child begins to use single words, model two words in the sentence you are communicating (e.g. “I want goldfish”– point to ‘I’ and ‘want’)
- Choose 3-5 new words to practice modelling each week
- The following video demonstrates how you can model your child’s Core board o **Video:** <https://youtu.be/QmuBaL-xWfw>
  - o **Video:** <https://youtu.be/wCVfMWdAKbE>

**Ideas for Modelling at Home:**

**Playing a Game**

One word	Two-word phrases	Three+ word phrases
Go, Turn, Again, More, Play, Like, Me, You	I go, My turn/your turn, I win/you win, Do again, More play, want help	I want go, I want play more, It is my/your turn, I like that/ I don’t like that

**Meal/Snacktime**

One word	Two-word phrases	Three+ word phrases
Help, Open, More, Good, Like, Hungry/Thirsty, Gone, Mine, Different	Want help, Want open, Like it, More eat/drink, Something different	I want more, I want open, I like it, I want more eat/drink, I don’t like it

**Reading a Book**

One word	Two-word phrases	Three+ word phrases
Go, Turn, Again, More, Help, Read, Like	You read, My turn/your turn, More read, Turn it, Something different	You read more, I want more, I like/don’t like that, I see that/it

**Playing Cars/Trains**

One word	Two-word phrases	Three+ word phrases
Go, Stop, Fast, Slow, Up, In, Out, Mine, Help	Ready go, Go fast/slow, Want that, Put down, Like it, See it	I go fast, I want go, I like that, I want something different, I put more on

For additional examples and modelling, please refer to the following resources/videos:

- o **Video:** [https://youtu.be/z4FGg3-W\\_gk](https://youtu.be/z4FGg3-W_gk)
- o **Video:** <https://youtu.be/kiqYapgu69g>

*This information contained in this resource is not intended for diagnostic purposes. It is to be used a reference for your own understanding and to provide you with some information about the different kinds of difficulties you may encounter with your child, and about different ways you may be able to support your child at home.*

