

Augmentative Communication & Writing Aids Program Eligibility & Referral Guidelines

All clients referred to ACWA must meet Surrey Place eligibility criteria:

- Clients of all ages with a confirmed diagnosis of developmental disability
- Clients under the age of 6 years old with a suspected developmental disability
- Live within the City of Toronto (postal code starts with 'M')

Face-to-Face Communication

Clients referred to ACWA for face-to-face communication:

- have communication needs that **cannot** be met by an IA S-LP or OT
- have **current** communication needs, not sufficiently met by current AAC system
- have communication needs in the **home**/community environment
- may need a joint OT and S-LP Assessment for AAC (i.e., have physical/visual/mounting issues, as well as communication issues)
- may benefit from using a 'high tech' Speech-Generating Device
- demonstrate motivation to communicate
- demonstrate intentional communication (*exception: for individuals with significant physical impairment impacting on the assessment of intentional communication, please call to discuss*)
- **have a facilitator**; someone who can take the lead in working with the ACWA Program, keep the programming up-to-date and troubleshoot when the device is not working properly

The client **must**:

- be able to consistently choose between 3 photos/picture symbols
- be able to use at least 20 symbols (e.g. words, signs, pictures) **intentionally, appropriately and spontaneously**
- be able to combine 2 or more symbols to express an idea (or show that this is an emerging skill)
- be able to 'directly access' a Speech Generating Device (do not use scanning)

OR

- be able to use written text to communicate

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Writing Aids

Clients referred to ACWA for written communication:

- have difficulty using a regular keyboard because of physical challenges
- can generate written text
- can communicate basic ideas spontaneously and independently (minimum 3-4 sentences of text or symbols)
- have current, everyday writing needs
- demonstrate the desire to develop the use of writing for communication
- demonstrate knowledge of basic computer skills (e.g., on/off, mouse use)