

Welcome to the module entitled, Share Resources, the twelfth module in the POWER: AAC training.

POWER: AAC is a project sponsored by the Pennsylvania Training and Technology Assistance Network (PaTTAN). This training is one of a series of modules designed to build the capacity of local educational agencies to serve students with complex communication needs who require the use of augmentative and alternative communication systems.

Module 12 will help you connect with a community of others who share a commitment to the principles of a POWER: AAC classroom, as well as experiences and idea about its implementation.

Training in the POWER: AAC Project is primarily self-directed. Each module is presented in a variety of formats, including a video format, PowerPoint presentation format and a print version of the PowerPoint with transcript notes. Some of the modules include supplemental presentation materials. Each module includes a pre and post test assessment.

Please complete the pre-test before starting this module.

In Module 1, you learned that each of the 5 letters in the word POWER represents one of the key principles of this project.

In building capacity of local educational teams, POWER: AAC classrooms have educational teams who have learned to practice powerful communication **PARTNER** skills and create powerful communication **OPPORTUNITIES**. In their classrooms, they implement power **WORDS** in social and instructional contexts. As part of their best practices, they continually utilize **EVIDENCE** in decision making about AAC systems and supports; and they share powerful **RESOURCES**.

Resources were listed in each of the first 11 POWER: AAC modules. However, there is one more valuable resource to discuss and that resource is **you**.

The most successful POWER: AAC teams actively sought resources from outside sources, plus developed resources which they shared with each other. They valued collaborative resource sharing, with each member of the POWER: AAC team respecting the contribution of other team members.

The POWER: AAC Project recommends using currently available online strategies and resources for sharing among people implementing POWER: AAC principles. In this module, you are encouraged to investigate options for connecting locally, as well as globally, with the community of people who share the beliefs and guiding principles of the POWER: AAC Project.

Effective POWER: AAC teams share information and materials.

When sharing information, they swap teaching tips, give advice based on their experiences, offer support in the use of AAC devices or apps, and provide guidance for working with parents of students using AAC systems.

When it comes to sharing materials, teachers and therapists share lesson plans, therapy and curriculum materials, data collection forms, parental supports, visuals for their classrooms, and share-able materials to enhance the professional development of other team members.

There are many resources listed in this module; however, the resources listed do not necessarily reflect or represent the policy of the Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network, nor does a listing

of a resource constitute an endorsement by the Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network.

It is the responsibility of the individual to determine whether or not the listed resources are appropriate for meeting the needs of students in their POWER: AAC classroom. It is also the responsibility of the individual to search out additional resources beyond any listed in this module.

Within a school district, regional center, or other organization, cloud sharing is the way many POWER: AAC teams share information among themselves. While they can invite others to join their cloud sharing network, the purpose of cloud sharing is generally to make information and material sharing available to everyone that is part of the organization or network.

If you are starting a POWER: AAC initiative in your school, you will want to tap into whatever strategy is used within your school district for collaborative resource sharing.

For sharing outside of your school network, consider how you will tap into the global, digital community.

With a click of a button on a computer, you can be swapping experiences with a colleague as a member of a professional special interest group. Another click or two, and you can be reading posts on social media dedicated to the topic of AAC, looking at pins shared on a digital bulletin board, reviewing a blog from a parent of a child who uses an AAC system, or shopping for practical materials made by teachers, therapists or parents that are sold in an open marketplace.

If you are a member of a national organization or a state chapter of an organization, explore your options for connecting with other members through that organization's professional special interest group in AAC. Many professional special interest groups offer opportunities for professional development and information sharing through publications, conference presentations, online communities, and online chat events.

However, you don't have to be a member of a professional organization to share information and resources.

Social media is one of the most popular ways for a community of like-minded people to interact with each other.

The strength of resource sharing via social media is the diversity of information that is available. However, the danger of resource sharing via social media is the time it takes to sift through the volume of information provided and the discernment that is required to separate accurate and appropriate information from questionable, biased, or self-serving posts.

Each of the Facebook groups listed on this slide has been formed by someone with an interest in the field of augmentative and alternative communication. By exploring these groups, you can find a range of information and resources which may be appropriate for students in your POWER: AAC classroom.

Twitter is another popular social media outlet that includes some excellent options for learning about resources in the field of AAC. This slide lists three popular and prolific Twitter users. By following these Twitter users, you will be able to connect with the ever growing web of people tweeting about AAC.

Digital bulletin boards are used to post resources, especially resources with a strong visual component. If getting information via digital bulletin boards is more your style, there are many people who have

developed Pinterest boards with AAC pins. To get started, follow boards and pins by Lauren Enders and PrAACtical AAC. Starting there will get you connected to other Pinterest resources that include AAC information.

Then there are blogs.

Blogging has become an important part of digital information sharing. One of the most popular and valuable AAC-specific blogs is PrAACtical AAC. For many, reading the PrAACtical AAC blog is a daily ritual and a “go-to” site for information which is aligned with the guiding principles of a POWER:AAC classroom.

Another favorite of POWER:AAC teams serving students with significant challenges is Group by Group. This blog provides a diary of the intervention program a classroom team is providing for their multiply impaired students in a self-contained special education program.

Another blog with resource information comes from Jane Farrall Consulting. This blog also includes information on literacy, AAC devices, and AAC apps.

At this point, you might be thinking, “I’m not really into social media.” Perhaps, you don’t do Twitter, or you’re not on Facebook, or you really don’t look at boards at Pinterest, or you don’t read blogs.

Fortunately, social media offers a kind of redundancy wherein you can access information in multiple ways. For example, Dr. Carole Zangari was mentioned as a valuable resource. That value is exponential because in addition to her huge expertise in the field of AAC, she mines social media, sharing what she finds in multiple ways.

Dr. Zangari’s blog is PrAACtical AAC. Her posts in that goldmine of a blog also appear on her Facebook page, also called PrAACtical AAC. And her Twitter handle is, of course, Carole Zangari@PrAACticalAAC.

Take a look at the website and you will see the range of social media outlets at the top – including Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, Instagram, and Scoop It.

So you can use the social media tool with which you are the most comfortable to connect with the people and resources you need.

Finally, the open marketplace is a way for therapists, parents, and teachers to download free and commercially available materials and resources. A popular open marketplace is “Teachers Pay Teachers.” Some of the authors of materials that focus on AAC and core vocabulary include Jenna Rayburn, Susan Berkowitz, a teaching team dubbed AdaptEd 4 Special Ed, and two women calling themselves Sister SLPs.

The open marketplace is also a way for you to market and commercially sell materials. If the policy of your school allows you, as a school employee, to develop and sell materials, it is hoped that quality materials that support a POWER:AAC classroom would be made available within the open marketplace.

In a recent, informal survey, AAC consultants were asked the following question: *“What are the TOP 5 things you search for online when looking for AAC Resources?”*

First, the respondents said that they wanted articles that document the use of core vocabulary. They want both the objective research that shows the use of core vocabulary by children and adults with

various disabilities, as well as subjective information about how children are using core vocabulary on a daily basis. There is already a lot of information about the use of core vocabulary, but you can add to the body of information by sharing your stories of the real-life use of core vocabulary by your students. Describe your students and tell others about how they are using core vocabulary. Collect and share language samples of your students, demonstrating their progress in the use of core vocabulary.

Next, they want lists of core vocabulary, but not just lists compiled by researchers with core words ranked by frequency of use, but lists of core words which have been selected by classroom teams for use in a core vocabulary project or initiative. They want to know what core words have been chosen by POWER: AAC teams, how the list of words might be broken down into modules for instruction, or an order of core words to teach through explicit instruction. If you are involved in a multi-year core vocabulary initiative, share your vocabulary plans for each year of your initiative. If you have taken a long list of core vocabulary words and broken them into vocabulary modules, share those modules. If you are doing a word-of-the-week approach for explicit vocabulary instruction, share the list that shows the order of your instruction.

Third, the AAC consultants want examples of core vocabulary boards and AAC device or app displays, especially for the most challenging of students. Starting with manual communication boards, share your examples of manual communication boards that have been developed for students with limited cognitive skills. Show where you started and how the board grew over time.

For students with severe visual challenges, share the symbols used, the arrangement and spacing of vocabulary, the use of color, and the addition of any tactile components to the board.

For students with significant motor challenges, share the core boards you developed for access through eye gaze, partner assisted scanning, or vocabulary encoding.

Many AAC devices come pre-programmed with vocabulary, including core vocabulary. However, some do not. Share core vocabulary programming you've done with AAC devices or apps that do not come pre-programmed with core words. For devices or apps that do come pre-programmed with core words, share your advice on how to add more core words and how you modified the organization of core words to meet the needs of your students.

Fourth, it's no surprise that the AAC consultants want more information on the implementation of core vocabulary in the classroom. Share the ways you are explicitly teaching core vocabulary. Show how talking with core vocabulary is part of the everyday talking you do in your class. And share anything and everything on how you are using core vocabulary within the curriculum, including lesson plans, any lesson materials, and video examples of the lessons.

Last, but not least, everyone wants more information that helps teams show the power behind POWER: AAC classroom principles. They want to help others document what they are doing and how their students are responding. Share how you are collecting data on vocabulary use and the overall communication development of your students. Share how you are collecting data on communication partner skills, such as modeling or prompting. Share your strategies for data collection, especially if you are using video documentation of skills. And don't forget to share your data collection forms, with information on how to use them.

As a final thought about Sharing Resources, I want to leave you with the word **SHARE**, which stands for Share Happily And Reap Endlessly. When we are willing to share information and resources, we get better at what we do and help others get better too.

But ultimately, when POWER: AAC teams are happily sharing information and resources, it is the student who uses AAC systems in a POWER: AAC classrooms who endlessly reaps the rewards.

As a way to SHARE, join a cloud sharing network with the members of your school team, school district, or regional center. Also, join and contribute to at least 1 online AAC community. Then, develop at least 1 material to share with your cloud sharing network and your online AAC community.

Please complete the post-test for this module. Thank you.