

AAC Eye Gaze System Considerations

Introduction:

Eye gaze systems use relatively new and complex technology. They are costly in terms of assessment, training and implementation, in addition to the expense of the systems themselves. It is important that teams attempt alternative access methods and screen students thoroughly before eye gaze is considered. Multiple device trials are required to maximize the chances of success as each device uses different algorithms to calculate and monitor eye gaze. Eye gaze is not successful for all users.

An eye gaze solution can be implemented successfully if:

- Team has considered, with full consultation with the district SLP, the full range of communication devices for the student, and uses a feature matching process that includes device features and ability prerequisites.

Suggested resources:

- AT Considerations For AAC (2010),
 - AAC: Questions To Help Teams Make The Right Choice For Now And The Future (2013),
 - Selecting a Communication Device (2013)
- Teams complete the ACETS Eye Gaze Technology Screening Checklist to understand the impact of eye health, attention, environment and support on successful eye gaze access.
- A non-technical eye gaze system or partner assisted scanning has been used successfully with the student
 - Examples include an e-tran board with symbols or alphabet, or a PODD (Pragmatically Organized Dynamic Display).
 - While a PODD is not an eye gaze system, it does allow the student to demonstrate competencies that would increase the chances of successful implementation of an eye gaze system.
- Scanning and head pointing systems have been tried over an appropriate period of time and have not been successful.
- During the trial period, the school district SLP and OT is capable of supporting an eye gaze system and district commits to the time required to trial (at least 3 times a week on an ongoing basis), troubleshoot, supervise and evaluate multiple systems. In addition to the above staff commitment, **students will use the device during the trial on a daily basis.**
- The team collaborates with a SET-BC consultant who has previous experience supporting eye gaze systems.
- Team members supporting the system are consistent year to year.
- A recent eye exam indicates there are no issues preventing successful use of the system.

Eye Gaze Device Trials:

- Trials should be conducted as early as possible in the school year since evaluation and implementation require a considerable amount of time. The formal loan request should be made once trials have taken place.
- Students should trial a minimum of 2 available systems each for at least a two week period, with frequent opportunities for practice. The trial period would not include the time required for staff to learn the device.
- The team should complete an AAC Device Trial Observation Form on each device and provide data on trials conducted. This is submitted with any Eye Gaze request.

Resources:

From SET-BC

[AAC: Questions to help teams make the right choice for now and the future](#) (2013)

[Selecting a Communication Device](#) (2013)

[AT Considerations- AAC](#) (2009)

[AAC Device Trial Observation Sheet](#) (2014)

External Resources

[Alberta Health Services- ACETS \(Augmentative Communication and Educational Technology Service\) Eye Gaze Technology Screening Checklist](#) (2012)
(Available from SET-BC Consultant)

[A Treatment Hierarchy for Acquiring Eye Gaze Access in Children](#) (2013)