

Factors Affecting Friendships of Children Who Use AAC and their Peers

Individual characteristics of child using AAC

- Differences in children's perception of friendship
 - Defined in broad terms related to proximity and shared experiences (e.g., someone in the same class)
- Friends may include staff and family members (Batorowicz, Campbell, vonTetzchner, King & Missiuna (2014))
- Difficulties in social competence
 - fewer initiations of communication (Chung, Carter, & Sisco, 2012; Clarke & Kirton, 2003; Ratcliff & Cress, 1999)
- Preference in communication modality
 - infrequent use of AAC system. Most common communication modality included vocalizations and gestures (Chung et al., 2012; Clarke & Kirton, 2003; Ronski, Sevcik, & Wilkinson, 1994; Raghavendra, et al. 2012; Thirumanickam et al., 2011)
- Motivation and skills
 - level of proficiency with AAC and motivation to use device contributed to quality and frequency of peer interactions (Batorowicz et al. 2014; Ronski, Sevcik, & Wilkinson, 1994)

Characteristics of peers

- Peer's social values and attitudes toward disability and motivations
 - motivation for friendship included altruism, public recognition, positive feedback from friend who used AAC. Friendship fulfilled social-emotional needs (Anderson, Baladin, & Clendon, 2011)
- Responsivity of peers
 - Peers may not consistently respond to communication attempts by children who use AAC (Chung et al., 2012; Ratcliff & Cress, 1999)

External/environmental factors

- Constraints related to speech-generating device (SGD)
 - Children who use AAC expressed frustration with time consuming construction of messages, problems with volume and voice output (Anderson, Baladin, & Clendon, 2011; Batorowicz et al., 2012)
- Lack of access to appropriate social vocabulary on SGD
- Children who use AAC have fewer opportunities to interact with peers (Batorowicz et al, 2012; Chung et al., 2012)
 - Children who used AAC primarily engaged with friends in activities with low communicative demands or peer interactions (Anderson et al., 2011; Thirumanickam, Raghavendra, & Olsson, 2011)

References

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King Marika; Lim Nicole; Nwosu, Nonye

Georgia State University