# 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; Romski, 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; Romski, 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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