References


Interactions with peers

Having friends improves quality of life.
- Provides opportunities for play.
- Helps develop social-emotional skills.
- Encourages academic achievement.
- Enhances self-esteem.
- Improves overall well-being.

Method

The search method used the following procedures:
- Online search of index databases: CINAHL, EBSCO, PsycINFO.
- Ancestral search of citations in papers found.
- Searches of relevant journals, including handsearch of journals.

Search terms used:
- augmentative and alternative communication
- interaction
- school
- peer
- friend
- communication

Results

- More appropriate initiations of interactions by participants who used AAC
- Fewer inappropriate attention-seeking behaviors by participants who used AAC
- More effective interactions among peers who used AAC
- More frequent reciprocal interactions between peers and participants.

Inclusion/exclusion criteria

Studies included in the analysis:
- Excluded studies included in the analysis:
- No studies met the exclusion criteria.

Participants who used AAC

- Mean age of 14.5 years old
- Range: 2-20 years old

AAC systems used by participants:

Category

POCA (voice output communication aid)
- 10
- 42

Computerized/rewritable notes
- 8
- 2

Sign language
- 2

Participants who have a range of disabilities

Sensory impairment
- 1
- 0

Cerebral palsy
- 2
- 0

Med.-severe intellectual retardation
- 19
- 0

General policy
- 31
- 0

Developmental delay/autism
- 12
- 0

AIDS
- 6
- 0

Down syndrome
- 3
- 0

Sensory impairment
- 4
- 0

Dependent variable: used AAC
- 10
- 0

Results

There were a small number of participants who used AAC.
- Limited generalization of results.

Discussion

Children and adolescents who use AAC:
- Have fewer opportunities for peer interactions.
- Participate minimally, unequally, or not at all.

Intervention to improve peer interactions is necessary.
- Intervention has been shown to be effective in increasing interaction.

Future research directions

More research is necessary to:
- Further understand the role of AAC.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of AAC.
- Investigate social contexts.
- Explore the role of AAC in relation to friendship.

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