




# Designing Effective AAC Displays for Individuals with Developmental and Acquired Disabilities:

## State of the Science and Future Research Directions

Janice Light, Krista Wilkinson, Amber Thiessen, David Beukelman, & Susan Koch Fager reviewed the current research on how various AAC display variables impact the visual attention and performance of children with developmental disabilities and adults with acquired conditions. A review of the evidence-based guidelines are shown below.

VSDs for children with developmental disabilities



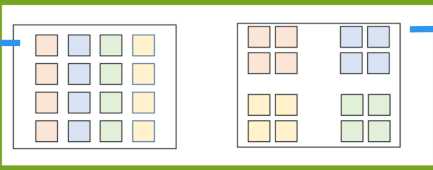
Use navigation bars with thumbnails of VSDs

Use personalized photos of meaningful activities

Include people engaged in motivating and shared activities

There is also emerging evidence to support the use of motion to capture visual attention to VSDs (e.g., video VSDs) or to specific elements in VSDs.

Grid displays for children with developmental disabilities

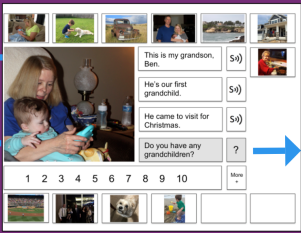


Use spatial cues to cluster symbols

Cluster symbols by internal color (if reasonable)

Background color should be used with caution; do not use with smaller grid displays (12-16 symbols) for children

VSDs for adults with acquired disabilities



Include text boxes next to VSD

Include people engaged in meaningful events

Use personalized or personally relevant photos

Grid displays for adults with acquired disabilities

**Minimal research to date:**

- Consider limiting the number of symbols & location levels when possible
- Consider the benefits of text alone, symbols alone, or paired symbols and text
- Consider use of familiar keyboard layouts (e.g., QWERTY)