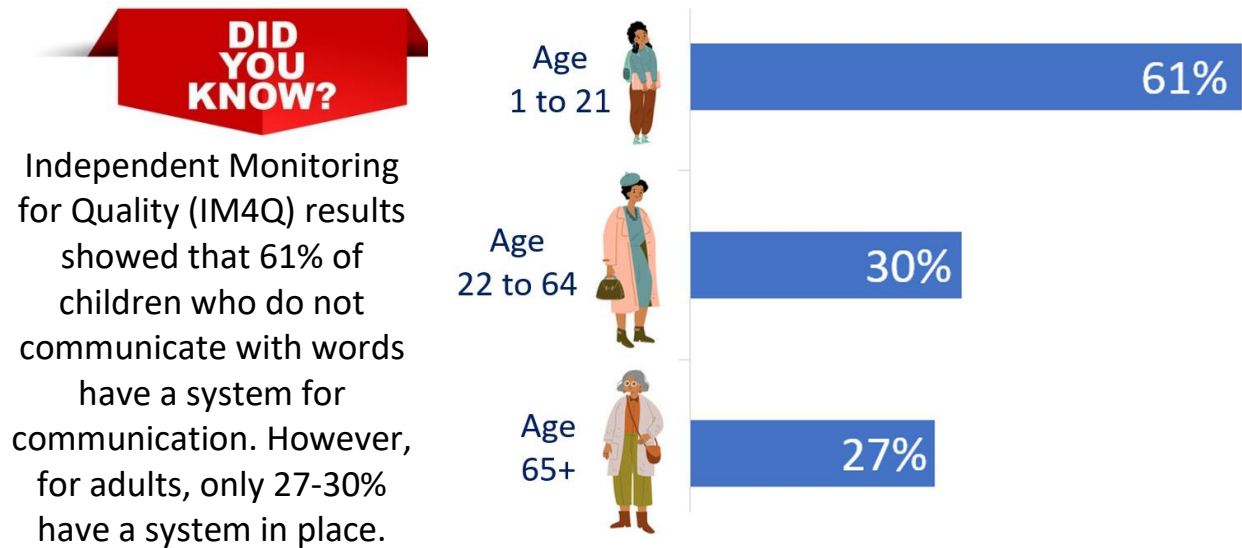










# Transitioning from School to Adulthood with Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC)



## Tips for Successful Transition with AAC

 <b>Start Planning:</b>	<p>At least a year before transition, start planning. Lots of children use school-owned devices. Start the process of getting a device that can be used outside of school to ensure a smooth transition.</p> <p>Where will the individual be during the time that they were typically at school? It is important to try to get the best picture of what the new environment will look like post-transition to identify the best way to support communication.</p>
 <b>Connect with Consultants or Specialists:</b>	<p>Develop a relationship with a local consultant or Speech and Language Pathologist (SLP) outside the school setting before transition. The school SLP and your new SLP or consultant can develop a transition plan.</p> <p>Things change; we change, and technology also changes. Having a specialist available if a new evaluation is needed is important. Transitions can be tough.</p>
 <b>Provide Pre-Transition Support to the New Setting:</b>	<p>Communication partner training with the new people in the individual's life can be extremely beneficial. Demonstrating good communication partner strategies specific to the individual and showing the meaning of the individual's non-symbolic means of communication i.e., behaviors and gestures is a valuable way to support both the AAC user and those new to them.</p>

 <b>Learn How to Program Your Device:</b>	<p>AAC users and their support people should take the time to learn how to use functions within an AAC system like editing and backing up vocabulary files.</p>
 <b>Have a Backup System in Place:</b>	<p>Having a backup system available is always important, but even more so during the transition process. Some individuals might use an old communication device or an app as a backup system, but this might not be an option for everyone. A low-tech backup helps to support all individuals if their main AAC system is broken or not available. One quick and easy way to create a backup system is to print screenshots of the main AAC system and assemble those into a communication book or binder. Including a page with the alphabet will help ensure that the individual can communicate a word that is not within the low-tech backup, as well.</p>
 <b>Have Troubleshooting Resources:</b>	<p>If something malfunctions, do the individual and their support people know how to fix the problem? Technology isn't perfect and things break. Many companies have quick handouts with troubleshooting tips that can be provided as a resource.</p>
 <b>How to Contact Technical Support:</b>	<p>It is important to know what to do or where to go if something is not working. Know the phone number, e-mail, or social media resource for specific systems and keep it handy so it can easily be accessed if there is a problem.</p>
 <b>Create a Communication Dictionary, Communication Passport, and/or Communication Profile:</b>	<p>A Communication Dictionary is an excellent tool to help teach people who are just meeting an individual who uses AAC more about how to be a good communication partner. It is a paper or digital guide that outlines what someone does, what we think it means, and what a good communication partner can do to respond.</p> <p>Communication Passports can be developed prior to transition. It belongs to the individual, provides information that is important to the AAC user, and is created with person-centered planning in mind.</p> <p>The Communication Profile is a quick one-page training tool that can be handed out. This person-centered support helps those that may not know the individual well enough to communicate effectively with them.</p>