

Augmentative-Alternative Communication: An Introduction

2 CE HOURS / .2 CEUs

PDH Academy Course #OT-1803

Course Abstract

This course immerses learners in the swiftly-changing world of Augmentative-Alternative Communication, touching on key vocabulary and definitions, common myths, potential users, and available levels of technology and their pros and cons.

Target audience: Occupational Therapists, Occupational Therapy Assistants, Speech-Language Pathologists, Speech-Language Pathology Assistants (no prerequisites).

NOTE: Links provided within the course material are for informational purposes only. No endorsement of processes or products is intended or implied.



This course is offered for 0.2 CEUs (Intermediate level; Category 1 - Domain of OT: Instrumental Activities of Daily Living; Category 1 - Domain of OT: Activity Demands; Category 1 - Domain of OT: Performance Skills).

The assignment of AOTA CEUs does not imply endorsement of specific course content, products, or clinical procedures by AOTA.

Learning Objectives

At the end of this course, learners will be able to:

- Recall the definitions of “communication” and “augmentative-alternative communication” as well as key terminology involved in discussions of Augmentative-Alternative Communication (AAC)
- Recognize populations for whom AAC intervention may be of benefit, with attention to the role of the communication partner in AAC
- Identify common myths surrounding AAC and rebuttals to each
- Differentiate between no tech, low tech, and high tech AAC components, with attention to their pros and cons
- Identify ways that the course material impacts the practice of Occupational Therapy

Timed Topic Outline

- I. Definitions and Terminology (10 minutes)
- II. Common Myths Surrounding Augmentative-Alternative Communication (AAC) (15 minutes)
- III. Who Should Use AAC and Why? (5 minutes)
- IV. AAC Systems – Just What Are We Talking About? (75 minutes)
No Tech, Low Tech, High Tech
- V. References, Additional Resources, and Exam (15 minutes)

Delivery & Instructional Method

Distance Learning – Independent. Correspondence/internet text-based self-study, including a provider-graded multiple choice final exam.

To earn continuing education credit for this course, you must achieve a passing score of 80% on the final exam.

Registration & Cancellation

Visit www.pdhtherapy.com to register for online courses and/or request correspondence courses.

As PDH Academy offers self-study courses only, provider cancellations due to inclement weather, instructor no-shows, and/or insufficient enrollment are not concerns. In the unlikely event that a self-study course is temporarily unavailable, already-enrolled participants will be notified by email. A notification will also be posted on the relevant pages of our website.

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Accessibility and/or Special Needs Concerns?

Contact Customer Service by phone at (888)564-9098 or email at support@pdhacademy.com.

Course Author Bio & Disclosure

Susan Berkowitz received a B.A. in Psychology from Clark University, an M.S. in Speech-Pathology and Audiology from Tulane, and an M.Ed. in Education Administration from California State University at Fullerton. She also has extensive graduate background in Special Education and Applied Behavior Analysis, and has worked with children with autism for more than 40 years.

Susan has worked in a variety of settings as a SLP, a Director of Education, and a Chairperson of the Speech Pathology Department. Her career has taken her to public and private schools, developmental centers, group homes, and adult day programs. She currently runs her own private practice in San Diego, providing Independent Educational Evaluations in speech-language, AAC, and Assistive Technology, as well as consultation and staff training. She presents at a variety of national conferences and provides workshops in AAC, autism, and literacy.

DISCLOSURES: Financial – Susan Berkowitz is the owner of, and a developer at, Language Learning Apps LLC; offers materials for purchase at TeachersPayTeachers.com; and received a stipend as the author of this course. Nonfinancial – No relevant nonfinancial relationship exists.