

AAC at the Mississauga Library

A proposed look at what modified communication for people with non-verbal and alternative communication needs at the Mississauga Library might look like.

Two guiding principles

“If you wait for perfect conditions you’ll never get anything done”

“Nothing about us without us”

Who uses or can use AAC?

- ✓ Kids, teens, and adults can all use AAC.
 - ✓ People surviving stroke, brain injury or degenerative illnesses.
 - ✓ Autistic people. Some may use a mix of spoken language, ASL, and AAC.
 - ✓ People with cerebral palsy, cognitive, communication and physical disabilities.
 - ✓ Many linguistic and communication shortfalls can be solved with AAC.
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- Over 1 in 10 Canadians used a smartphone or device with specialized features or a computer, laptop or tablet with specialized software or adaptations.
 - Approximately 1.5% Canadians older than age 4 years have difficulty speaking and being understood. About 0.8% of the population under 45 have some kind of communication disability. Over age 85 it is 4.2% percent.
 - Every branch in the Mississauga Library has an iPad. It can be used in the role of enhancing customer service and experience with AAC.

Why use AAC at the library?

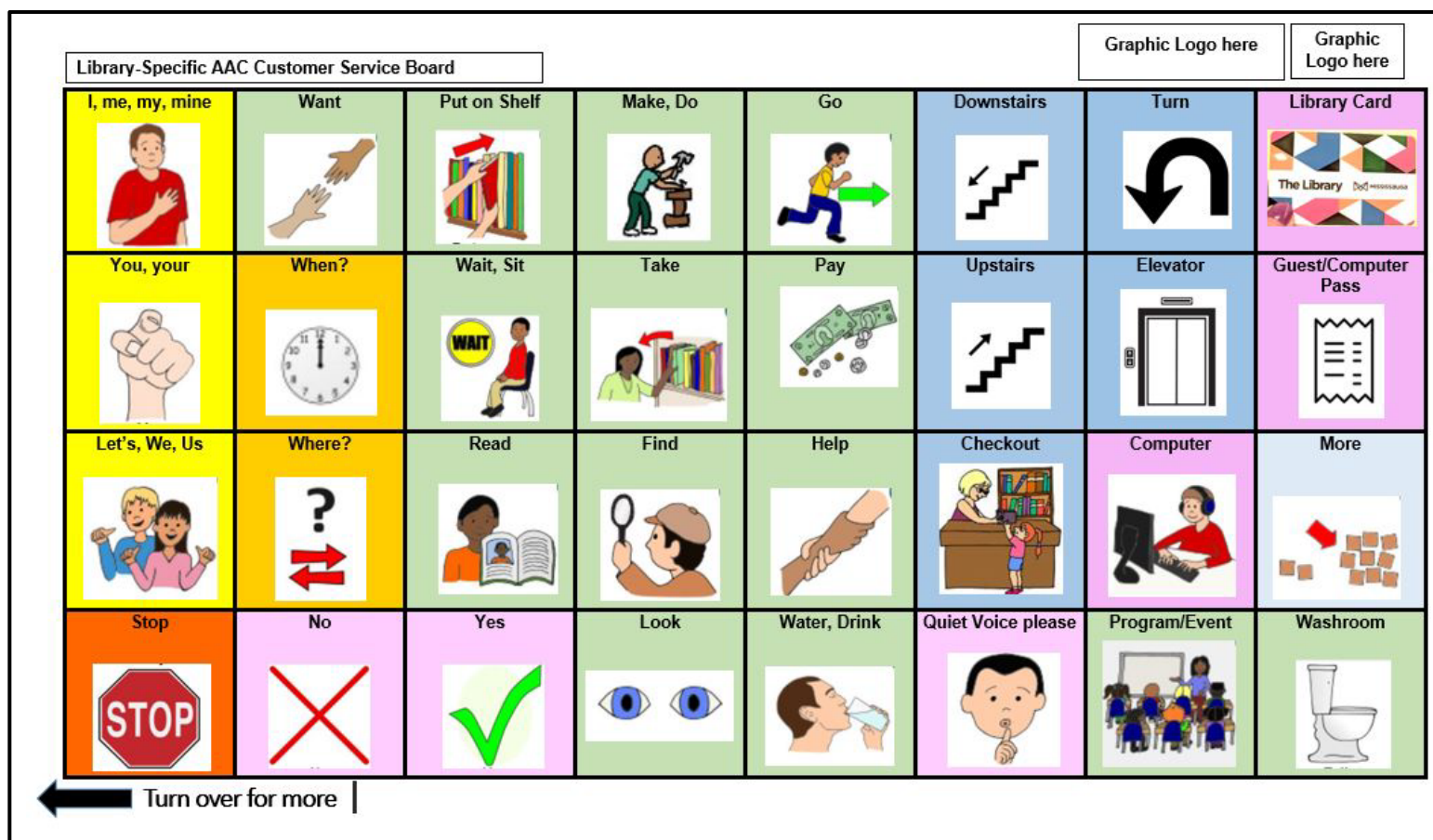
The library is the perfect place to model AAC. AAC can be found used in a medical setting, education setting and many libraries are embracing it's use for customer service and programming. Many libraries are working with various disabled patrons and groups to improve customer experience.

- ✓ It's within our ability to do for our customers.
- ✓ AAC can be implemented in a low tech, medium tech or high tech manner.
- ✓ It's the (spirit of the) law and allows us to live our values of inclusivity and belonging.

Library-Specific Customer Service Board

A sample Library oriented AAC Board at the customer service desk might look like this. I propose we keep it brief and make it laminated, two sides with 28-32 symbols on each side: **Side A:**

These images and the formatting are not final, this is a sample.



The Symbol for...	Colour
People	Yellow
Verbs	Green
Descriptions	Blue
Nouns	Orange
Social	Pink
Miscellaneous	White

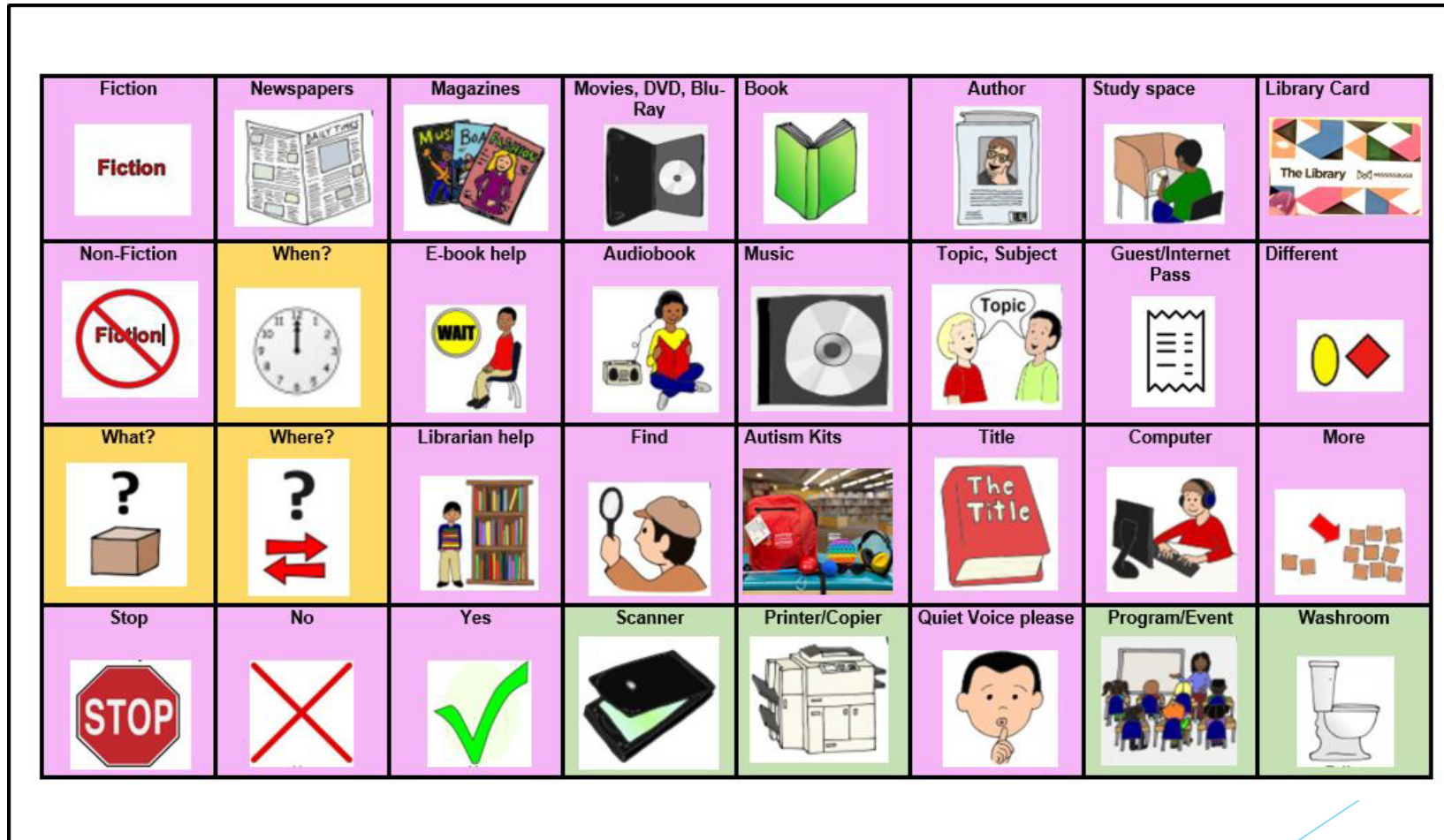
Library-Specific Customer Service Board

(continued.)

6.1

Side B:

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Leaders in Tablet and App based AAC.

Considerations for an ideal AAC tablet solution include: Price, Can boards be customized for facilities and services and does a Lifetime/Long-term license exist?

- **AssistiveWare Proloquo2go:** Recognized as one of the best and most comprehensive but also the most expensive at Licenses of varying price.
- **Avaz:** A solid option at a mid-point price. The Lifetime edition is around \$279.00.
- **FluentAAC:** Another mid-point price option and they have printable and customizable boards. This is my personal favorite as I find the images clear and relatable.
- Other Options such as: **Speak for Yourself** and **Chatterboards AAC:** Also harder to manage and learn but affordable. These can also be explored.

Sources to Explore:

- ALA (The American Library Association) page on AAC: [An Overview of AAC on the American Library Association webpage.](#)
- ALA Blogger Chelsey Roos' AAC entry on the ALA Blog: [An ALA guide to using AAC and making users of AAC more comfortable in the library.](#)
- Michigan Library's Communication Boards: [Michigan library systems success with AAC Communication boards.](#)
- Halifax Library and Autism Support Materials: [Halifax library has comprehensive Autism resources and has had much success.](#)