

# Playground Augmentative Communication Board

*Expanding communication access in Arlington*

The Doug Flutie Jr. Foundation for Autism donated a Playground Communication Board to the town of Arlington and it is located at the Summer Street Park, at 422 Summer Street, next to the Ed Burns Arena.



## What is Augmentative/Alternative Communication (AAC)?

AAC helps individuals express thoughts, wants and needs, feelings, and ideas, using the following:

- manual signs, gestures, and finger spelling
- tangible objects
- photographs and line drawings
- picture communication boards and letter boards
- speech-generating devices

## Who Uses AAC?

- Children and adults use different types of AAC. People with autism, cerebral palsy, aphasia, and many other disabilities benefit from AAC.
- Many children who are learning to talk benefit from visual models of language. In addition, using pictures along with words helps young children understand symbolic thought, as well as cause and effect.
- AAC offers shy or anxious individuals the opportunity to communicate without speaking.
- Picture symbols can be a shared language between individuals who may not share the same spoken language.

## How Do I Use a Playground Communication Board?

- Bring your child's attention to the board. Point to the pictures and label them.
- Use the pictures to talk about what you see and what is happening around you. Children need to see others using the "language" in order to start using it themselves.
- Encourage your child to make a choice using pictures, such as "Should we use the slide or the swings first?"
- Help your child build sentences by pointing to several pictures in a row (e.g. "I + want + swing").
- Invite others to play by pointing to picture symbols, using a shared language.

Visit the Arlington Disability Commission:

<https://www.arlingtonma.gov/town-governance/boards-and-committees/disability-commission>

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