

## **TEN QUICK AND EASY THINGS TO DO WHEN YOU MEET AAC USERS**

Here are some tips for when meeting a person who uses an *alternative augmentative communicator*:

- Introduce yourself.
- Ask user to show you how their communication system works.
- Pause and wait for user to construct a message. **BE PATIENT.** It might take awhile.
- Don't feel you have to keep talking all the time. Relax and get into this slower rhythm of exchanging information.
- Give the user an opportunity to ask you questions or make comments.
- Don't finish the user's sentences/words for him/her unless you get permission.
- Interact at eye level if at all possible. Grab a chair if the user is in a wheelchair.
- Pay attention to facial expressions and gestures.
- Be honest. If you don't understand, admit it. Ask the user to try again.
- Talk directly to the user, not to his/her friend.

From Blackstone, S. (1991) *Augmentative Communication News*