

Stimming with AAC



This resource was produced by Indigo therapists with funding received from Telethon 2021

Sometimes communication systems can become sources of self-stimulation ('stimming').

This can look different for everyone and can be for different reasons.

Examples of different types of stimming with AAC

Visual:

- *Reflective screens*
 - *Page flicking*
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Auditory:

- *Repeated pressing of a word/phrase*
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Tactile

- *Feeling tabs*
- *Tapping*

- *Feeling*
- *Fidgeting*

Vestibular

- *Moving*
- *Balancing*
- *Spinning*

Taste/Oral

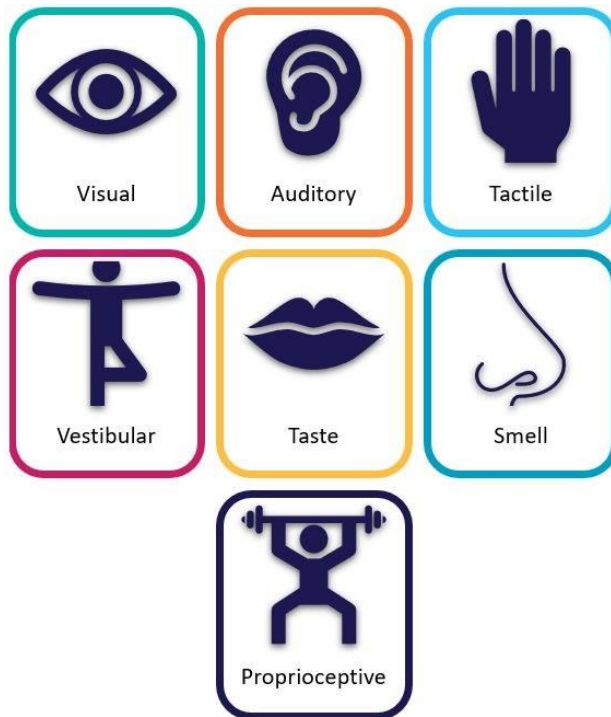
- *Biting cases/straps*

Smell

- *Sniffing pages*

Proprioceptive

- *Pulling on, wearing*
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The purpose

This stimming could be fulfilling a range of needs.

Examples include:

- *Communication*
 - *Learning*
 - *Regulation*
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The effect on others

Whilst filling a need for an individual, this use of devices can impact other people in their life (e.g., classmates) by adding auditory or visual distractions.

It can sometimes be difficult to know how to respond.

Engaging someone with their stim might be a way to follow their interest and spark an interaction.

Responding to stimming



Communication



Learning



Regulation

Communication

- *Respond as if it is meaningful*
- *Offer an opportunity for the individual to add more:*

- *“Do you have something else to say?”*

Learning

- *Support the learning:*

- *Add more language.*

- *Support the sensory needs of others:*

- *Suggest another time to explore.*

- *Offer headphones.*

- *Discuss ways to adjust volume.*

Regulation

- *Support the need:*
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– Offer alternatives

- *Stopping a regulation strategy without replacing it could be distressing and doesn't take away the need*
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Planning to support stimming with AAC

The goal is to support individuals to meet their communication, learning, and regulation needs.

It can be helpful to try out a range of strategies to figure out what works for the individual and those around them wherever they go.



For more information

For more information visit our website: Telethon: Country Kids Communicate ([indigosolutions.org.au](https://www.indigosolutions.org.au))¹

Download this as a PDF document: [Stimming with AAC](#)²

 **Phone:** 08 9381 0600

¹<https://www.indigosolutions.org.au/our-services/services-for-schools/telethon-country-kids-communicate>

²https://www.indigosolutions.org.au/docs/default-source/telethon-resource-sheets/12_stimmingwithaac.pdf?Status=Temp&sfvrsn=e41c245b_2

 **Web:** www.indigosolutions.org.au

 **Email:** help@indigosolution.org.au³

References

<https://www.assistiveware.com/blog/assumptions-about-autism-and-aac>

<https://justkeepstimming.com/2019/05/21/types-of-stimming-infographic/>

³<mailto:help@indigosolution.org.au>