



INTRODUCTION

- AAC Camp Alberta was founded in 2016 to support families with children with complex communication needs who use an augmentative or alternative communication (AAC) device.
- Previous research projects have addressed outcomes for parents and graduate student counsellors who participated in AAC Camp Alberta.
- Previous research has found that siblings of children who use AAC also benefit from participation in camp activities to encourage friendship, enjoyment, and educational opportunities with AAC and communication (Land, 2017).

PURPOSE

A focus on the experiences and perspectives of siblings of children who use AAC who participated in AAC Camp Alberta. While gaining a deeper understanding of this relationship was key, information was also used for program planning.



METHODS

- Siblings aged 4-13 participated in programming at AAC Camp 2018.
- Siblings (n=11) were interviewed about their perspective on their AAC Camp 2018 experience 7 months after camp.
- Interviews were transcribed and independent parallel coding of the interviews was completed using NVivo to identify recurring themes.
- Information from the interviews was used to enhance future camp programming.

RESULTS

Major Themes	Examples
Experiences at AAC Camp	"It was pretty fun... I think all of us had a good time."
Sibling Group	"Sometimes it feels like in this community the siblings are not noticed as much but it's good to know that I'm not alone."
Sibling Relationship	"We're a big part of our little brother's life too, so we'd like to know a bit more because they're going to a part of our lives, like all the way till the end."
AAC Learning & Use	"[It's hard when I'm] trying to help him find some things when I don't really understand how to use it very well."
Future AAC Camp Development	"Use some applied AAC knowledge that they learned from like some sort of lesson and apply it into a game.....make it so it's more hands on."
Sibling Interactions	"When you're learning how to use it, I would like to have [my sibling] there."



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Participants (siblings & families)



DISCUSSION & IMPLICATIONS

- Results contributed to a better understanding of the relationship that children have with their siblings with complex communication needs.
- Results supported the importance of sibling involvement in partner communication training.
- Interviews suggested siblings wanted opportunities to learn about AAC at camp.
- Interview responses were used to create engaging and educational programming for siblings of AAC users at camp.
- Limitations include number of siblings interviewed, interviewer bias, and time between camp and interviews.
- Future research should focus on enhancing ways to provide communication partner training for siblings.



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