

Christmas and AAC



Christmas is a fantastic, fun time of the year where people who use AAC can join in on all of the commotion!
Here are some ideas on how everyone can get involved over the Xmas holidays.

❖ Help me make Christmas cards and sign them off with my name

- Show off your creative side. Get out the paper, markers, crayons, glitter, glue, and scissors, and create some holiday cards with your family. They can model things on the device as I am getting my 'Picasso' on:

I made a star, my tree is green and red, I like this, I need glitter, red on, green first, help me, I like yours, more glue.

- If I cannot help make the cards I can tell them what to draw:





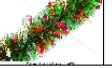







Big star, more yellow, stop that, 2 more, different colour, Do little drawing, put glitter on.

- Even if writing is difficult we can use alternative pencils or a QWERTY keyboard on a device to sign my name on the card.

❖ Make sure you have Christmas related words on your communication system

We can use lots of core words to talk about Christmas. E.g. In the phrase 'I want to make a snowman. Can you help me?' there is only one non-core word!! However, in order to have maximum participation over Christmas and the lead up to it, make sure you have access to Christmas specific vocabulary such as on a fringe strip to add to your core board, or a folder in your high tech communication system that includes all

things Christmassy. The 'Christmas' page is usually deep within your device, so get someone to make a quick temporary link on the main page that takes you straight to the 'Christmas' page.

○	○	○	○							
Christmas tree 	decorate 	Santa Claus 	carols 	tinsel 	bauble 	xmas crackers 	reindeer 	elf 	stocking 	wreath 
Christmas 										

❖ **Go to the mall and tell Santa what you want for Christmas**

The Santa at the mall may not be a skilled communication partner, so pre-prepare a message on your message button or on your communication system of what you want for Christmas. Be involved to whatever extent possible in preparation of the message at home to ensure that Santa gets the right information!



❖ **Shopping for gifts**

Don't forget your communication system when you are out shopping! What a great way to get their opinion on the gifts you are buying.

- **Mum or Dad can model things like:**
I like this, I like the red one, Not that, we need 2 more, that is funny/scary/silly/beautiful, This one!
- **They can ask questions:** *What about that one? What do you think about the red one? How many should we get?*



- **They can offer you choices** by holding up 2 or three items and getting them to point (with their hands or eyes) at which gift they think you should buy.

❖ **Easy-read Christmas books**

Tar Heel Reader is a library of accessible, beginning level readers for students of all ages and ability (1 and 2 switch books as well). There are sooo many awesome books about Christmas. Below are some of my favourite:

<https://tarheelreader.org/2013/12/05/santas-cat-deers/>

<https://tarheelreader.org/2011/12/23/12-days-of-christmas/>

<https://tarheelreader.org/2009/06/04/on-the-christmas-tree-3/>



Santa's cat deers are mad.

❖ **Get ready to 'show-and-tell' everyone at school what you did on Christmas day**

You could do this low-tech by using a home-school news sheet (there's a holiday version on the TalkLink website at: <https://talklink.org.nz/uploads/5754d4324970b66b5561ff508814a811.pdf>) or you could record a message on your mid-tech device, OR put together a short story with photographs on your high-tech device using visual scenes or 'stories and scripts'.

❖ **Holiday baking**

Let's cook together! We can use visual recipes, take pictures or cut recipes out of magazines. Do you have a Powerlink? What an awesome opportunity to turn the blender or mixer on and off. Get your bossy pants on and give instructions when icing a cake or decorating a cookie. Say what colour you want, 'big' or 'little' decorations, ask for 'more' icing and "put on your favourite items". Mum and Dad can use this as a great modelling activity. Use the green action words to describe what's happening in the kitchen: e.g. 'waiting' for it to cook, 'turn on/off' the oven, 'mix', 'taste' the batter, 'eat' it, 'clean' the bowl because it's 'dirty', 'put in' the flour, 'take out' of the oven... there's a lot you can say in the kitchen with core vocabulary!