



A WORLD OF FREE AND LOW-COST RESOURCES FOR PEOPLE WHO RELY ON AUGMENTATIVE COMMUNICATION

Introduction

For the past five years the Central Coast Children's Foundation has periodically published an on-line newsletter chronicling augmentative communication activities in low-resource "emerging" areas and providing easy access to new ideas and low-cost, no-cost on-line resources (free newsletters, downloadable training materials, downloadable communication boards, *etc.*, *etc.*)

Each newsletter, currently curated and edited by Dorothy Fraser, includes (1) lead stories about exciting AAC initiatives in areas around the globe where AAC is in its early phases of development, (2) announcements about upcoming events and conferences, and (3) a collection of resource citations that can connect readers to sites that can prove useful in low resource areas. Most require little or no cost, describe simple materials that can meet local needs and conditions. Many connect with freely downloadable items that can be put to immediate use. All the back copies of Augmentative Communication World News are available for free download at: <http://www.centralcoastchildrensfoundation.org/home/augmentative-communication-world-network/acwn-newsletters/>

We have now compiled this collection of the still-available resources that have been described in these past newsletters in this single document. This 33-page document provides one-click access to all of these practical resources.

This useful resource document can easily lead you to materials that cover a wide range of valuable ideas and materials, including on-line videos, apps, free pamphlets, communication boards, free newsletters, low-tech devices and materials, and instructions for creating low-cost support materials from locally available materials (market cards, communication passports, *etc.* Some especially interesting examples include:

1. A video explaining cortical visual impairment, a too-often undiagnosed condition of children who need to rely on AAC that can substantially impede their progress, and steps that can help alleviate its impact.
2. Scores of web sites that open the door to free, immediately downloadable communication boards, staff training materials, classroom materials, and the like.
3. Other Ways of Speaking, an excellent, simple, clear, colorful 52-page booklet that introduces the basic ideas of AAC.
4. Access to useful, free or inexpensive tablet apps and app lists.
5. A web site that provides guidance on the creation and use of Personal Communication Passports

FREE AND LOW-COST RESOURCES FOR PEOPLE WHO RELY ON AUGMENTATIVE COMMUNICATION

I. VIDEOS

Cortical Visual Impairment and the Evaluation of Functional Vision

In this webcast provided by the Perkins School in Watertown, Massachusetts, Dr. Christine Roman-Lantzy presents an overview of Cortical Visual Impairment (CVI). This resource is particularly useful in that it provides a transcript divided into the six chapters of the webcast: An introduction to CVI, the importance of early diagnosis, characteristic behaviors of CVI, diagnostic issues, evaluation functional vision and interventions to improve functional vision.

Roman-Lantzy notes that while cortical visual impairment is by far the leading cause of visual impairment in children today, and will likely remain that way, little has been done to improve early diagnosis measures. She notes there are strict protocols to examine children born prematurely for detached retinas and protocols put in place for when children should have eye exams, but that no such protocols exists to monitor or identify children with CVI. Says Roman-Lantzy, “That's actually something that I think is not really difficult to do, but I don't think pediatric specialists have really concentrated on identifying CVI early.”

She identifies three major ways of diagnosing CVI: 1) eye exams that examine the way a child actually uses their vision 2) finding out if the child has experienced a big neurologic event which is common for children with CVI and 3) checking for the ten characteristics associated with CVI which include unusual attention to movement and colors. Although these three measures can provide a comprehensive way of confirming the presence of CVI, they are not always used. “And so,” explains Dr. Roman-Lantzy, “because there is no declared protocol in the medical community to identify CVI, some children with CVI are given certain kinds of diagnostic tests that are often associated with children with ocular visual impairment.”

A diagnostic test called a CVI Range is used to determine the degree of effect of CVI on a zero to ten scale and then to design appropriate interventions based on that range. Dr. Roman believes it's important to diagnostically match the interventions to that assessed level carefully, “because what we're really trying to do is to encourage children to use their vision in functional routines, in meaningful activities, but by making adaptations to materials and environments based on that assessed score, we can actually encourage use of vision in a really meaningful way.”

<http://www.perkins.org/resources/webcasts/cvi-and-the-evaluation-of-functional-vision.html>

PrAACtical AAC: Evidence-based principles and practice: Beware the trap of readiness

This video provides an in-depth discussion of best practices in choosing and using AAC devices and displays. Although it's a bit long (over 45 minutes), checking out even just the first ten

minutes might be worthwhile for anyone curious about how and why to choose a particular AAC device or AAC app. While some of the mid-tech and high-tech AAC devices mentioned are probably not appropriate to the financial situations of people in emerging areas, the presenters also pay attention to no-tech and light-tech tools (*e.g.* communication boards and communication books).

The two presenters, speech language pathologist Kristen Carroll and AAC training specialist Bonnie Mintun, begin their talk by sharing quotes from individuals that illustrate what it's like to be unable to speak and highlight the important role of communication in quality of life.

Carroll explains: "There are no prerequisites to the use of AAC devices and systems. There is no hierarchy of devices or skills that need to be put in place before a system can be implemented or tried. You don't have to wait for a skill to develop before trying a variety of systems. It's not a hierarchy of starting with no or light tech and moving on up, it's using everything." She provides an example through the story of a young girl named Anna, narrated by her mother. Anna's mother advises parents to push back against what she refers to as a 'trap of readiness,' which she experienced when care providers constantly told her Anna wasn't ready for a certain AAC option and wouldn't be ready to use it.

Instead of waiting for the development of a 'prerequisite skill' (in Anna's case, pointing) before allowing patients to try a tool, the presenters encourage professionals to make a whole toolbox of tools available to patients. "Our philosophy", says Dr. MIntun, "is to learn while doing, don't get ready to learn something."

<http://praacticalaac.org/video/video-of-the-week-aac-evidence-based-principles-and-practice/>

AAC Market Cards in Ghana for students with communication challenges. AAC Market Cards, designed as "*effective communication alternatives for students in the market place,*" are becoming a popular AAC tool in Ghanaian unit (Special Needs) schools. Buying things for the family is a traditional role of children in Ghanaian society, but many students in Ghana's Special Needs schools cannot communicate well enough to go shopping. Seeing a great opportunity for the use of AAC methods, Cate Crowley and her Columbia University graduate students showed teachers how to develop communication cards for requesting common market goods and amounts to purchase. They used locally available materials to give them a "laminated" feel. The cards allow the students to purchase what their parents need.

After developing the cards, Crowley, her colleagues, students and Ghanaian lead teachers held sessions for special education teachers at the annual AAC teacher retreats. Many teachers now know how to make and use the cards. Also, students used the cards in their local markets and parents are overjoyed. To learn more about the Market Cards project go to:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uJG2K0fFBoQ>

Futbols (Soccer) Balls Facilitate Inclusion in Ghana. One World Futbols recently created a

mild sensation at the January 2013 professional development retreat for special needs teachers in Ghana. This event was organized to transmit locally relevant AAC strategies and tools to special education teachers. The specially constructed “futbols” are designed to last much longer than regular soccer balls. It was soon obvious that they could lure regular education students into contact with students with special needs on the playing fields. The donation of the “futbols” was part of this year’s third annual retreat. Public Affairs Officer, Sara Stryker from the US Embassy in Accra, joined the retreat and lent her support to Columbia University’s ongoing efforts

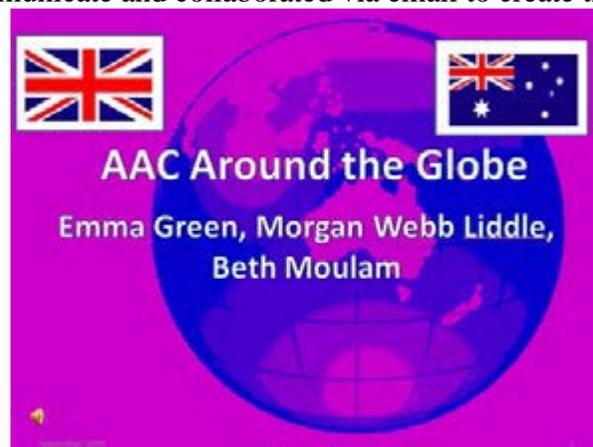
Most importantly, the kids loved the soccer balls. One World Futbols gave students with disabilities a chance to interact and play with peers from the general education school. The contribution of a simple game of soccer toward greater inclusion should not be underestimated. Check out how futbols encourage greater inclusion, go to:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k4qbTIYVE58>

What Really Matters? Some people might ask, "What does a good conversation using low-tech AAC really look like?" The clinicians at Thames Valley Children's Centre have provided us with an excellent dialogue between two people using low-tech AAC message boards. This video will remind people that technology is great, but the real power lies in communication. Go to <http://practicalaac.blogspot.com/2012/09/what-really-matters.html>

AAC Around the World: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JGQ7wCsT3AY>

You Tube videos demonstrate how powerful communication devices can be for their users. Three girls, Emma, Morgan and Beth from Australia and England are AAC users. They each use different devices to communicate and collaborated via email to create this video.



Roger Ebert reflects on his communication challenges at TED 2011. For a man whose life has been built around communication, the loss of the ability to speak is a particularly cruel fate. But it's one that film critic Roger Ebert demonstrated that he could overcome, in a talk at the TED 2011 Conference in Long Beach, California, in February.

These are my words, but this is not my voice, Ebert told the audience of nearly 2,000. This is Alex, the best computer voice I've been able to find, which comes as standard equipment on every Macintosh. For most of my life, I never gave a second thought to my ability to speak. It was like breathing. In those days, I was living in a fool's paradise. After surgeries for cancer took

away my ability to speak, eat or drink, I was forced to enter this virtual world in which a computer does some of my living for me.

To view his speech, go to

<http://www.cnn.com/2011/OPINION/04/17/ebert.voice/index.html?hpt=C2>

If you are involved in **Advocacy and Independent Living** the following video will be of interest to you. In addition to the sites I have listed there are many others on Youtube. Just search Independent Living.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dupabkw46Qk>

The Language Stealers.<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XhTgu7tS7CE>

If you have trouble with this url, “google” The Language Stealers and click on the link to youtube. There are actually two videos.

How to make Talking Communication Boards with Power Point.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JQr966uf-4M>.

Note: If you have trouble with this url, “google” How to make Talking Communication Boards with Power Point and click on the link to youtube.

Surfing for AAC Videos:

Sources of information about all aspects of augmentative communication are available on-line. A whole variety of demonstration materials that support training/workshops, awareness of augmentative communication, the achievements of those who rely on it, school and community functions are there for the ‘surfing’. Enjoy yourself for a week or so with the following examples from Google and You Tube!

You Tube: http://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=alternative+and+augmentative+communication&search_type=&aq=1m&oq=Augmentative+Communication

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rz2HpGC9vbw> Shows the remarkable achievements of someone with complex communication needs with the use of assistive technology.

There is a Canadian site that shows adults commenting on their lives and community living experiences with communication boards via direct selection and assisted scanning. To view them go to www.accpc.ca select ‘Pointing It Out’ and find ‘video clips’ in the left hand column. Enabling Dreams is a video that shows some highly motivated students and the use of assistive technology in a university setting.<http://www.edutopia.org/assistive-technology-enabling-dreams-video>

OTHER RESOURCES

AACKnowledge: The AAC Evidence Base

The AAC evidence base research project was initiated by Communication Matters, (ISAAC UK) that is involved in a wide-range of activities that promote AAC services. The project supports the collection of consistent and relevant case data *and* more robust data collection. The AAC evidence base website brings together information and research evidence about AAC in one place and in an accessible manner, making it a very useful resources for AAC practitioners in emerging areas.

For those less familiar with AAC, a practical Glossary of Terms is provided with definitions of common terms and links to further information. Also highly useful is the Plain Language Summaries page, which summarizes relevant reports and articles in an easy to understand manner. The Fact Sheet section contains well-organized collections of information on communication aid and conditions that limit communication such as stroke and aphasia.

Perhaps most unique to the website is the AAC Case Stories section, where you can find a collection of case stories from different personal and professional perspectives. In one case study, a speech and language pathologist shares the strengths and challenges of different AAC systems used during her experience working with a client for over ten years. Another tells the story of a man's decline in communication abilities after leaving his supporting school environment. www.aacknowledge.org.uk

Tots-n-Tech Oct. 2012 E-newsletter: *Using Visual Supports with Tots and Toddlers*

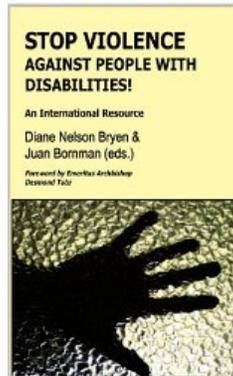
Produced by The Tots 'n Tech Research Institute, an inter-university collaboration between Thomas Jefferson University and Arizona State University

This newsletter is a useful resource for anyone interested in learning how to use visual cues to aid in communication with children. It explains how visual supports that have proven successful in preschools and childcare centers can be easily and inexpensively made and applied in a variety of situations in the home. A communication system that includes visual supports can allow children who may have difficulty communicating with words to learn about daily activities and routines and remember what is expected of them during an activity.

Visual supports can play a useful role in establishing activities and routines for both typically developing children and children with disabilities. Additionally, they can enhance memory, serve as a cue for new skills, prevent challenging behavior and support social competence. Parents should assess the needs of their children and set goals before choosing the visual support that will work best for their child and the type of visual cue to use e.g. photos or real objects. The document includes guidance and how-instructions for seven useful visual supports, including contingency maps, choice boards and cue cards.

<http://tnt.asu.edu/files/Oct2012Newsletter.pdf>

“VIOLENCE AND JUSTICE FOR PERSONS WITH COMPLEX COMMUNICATION NEEDS: AN INTERNATIONAL RESOURCE “ By Diane Nelson Bryen



["Stop Violence Against People with Disabilities"](#) has been published and is available digitally from [Kindle eBooks](#). The editors are Diane Nelson Bryen, professor emerita from Temple University, USA and extraordinary professor in the Centre for AAC and Juan Bornman, Director of the Centre for AAC at the University of Pretoria, South Africa. The book provides a multinational and multidisciplinary perspective on violence and abuse against children and adults with disabilities.

The book's focus is children and adults who have little or no functional speech as a result of a variety of disabilities. Because of this disability, they are especially vulnerable to violence and are often denied access to the justice system. It goes beyond describing the extent of the problem. It focuses on promising practices from across the globe. These promising practices have evolved from seven countries across five continents.

Chapters are modelled on a real case study from the particular country. Of special note is the inclusion of picture-based and text-based communication boards called *You Can Tell and be Heard* in Afrikaans, English, French, Hebrew, Hindi, isiZulu, and Sepedi languages for children and adults.

Stop Violence Against People with Disabilities! An International Resource is intended for peers who work in the fields of disability and law. Persons with disabilities and their carers are the major stakeholders and can learn much from the chapters in the book and the resources provided in the appendices. Abstracts have been written in the home language of the author and in Easy English.

Anyone who is committed to human rights and to ensuring that the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* is implemented in their countries will benefit from reading this book. As Archbishop Emeritus, Desmond Tutu wrote in the forward "*Stop Violence*

Against People with Disabilities is not about charity, but rather the human rights of almost one billion members of humankind”. 4

ACCESS FOR ALL: INCLUSIVE COMMUNICATIONS. Available at

www.efds.co.uk/assets/0000/9149/EFDS_Inclusive_comms_guide_accessible_PDF_APRIL_2014_FINAL.pdf

The guide is written for sport and physical activities - but the content is also relevant for other public sectors looking for ways to be inclusive. It contains chapters on

- Why is inclusive communication important?
- Getting started including
Developing an inclusive communications policy
- Using design to improve accessibility
- Inclusive communications better practice checklist
- Resources and further information

The guide is written for sport and physical activities - but

CONFERENCES

Practical Supports for Language Learning. Looking for AAC resources, AAC strategies or just discussion about the state of the AAC field? If so, have a look at **Praactical AAC**, a blog and website managed by two dedicated speech language pathologists, Robin Parker and Carole Zangari. The mission of **Praactical AAC** is “*to improve the level of AAC services available to individuals with significant communication challenges by supporting speech-language pathologists and other interested stakeholders.*” These professionals are constantly updating their resources and discussions and the information is very accessible and valuable to anyone interested in the area of AAC. Thus, **Praactical AAC** fulfils its goals admirably.

For more information go to: <http://praacticalaac.org/> and <http://praacticalaac.blogspot.com/2012/09/>

Aragonese Portal of Augmentative and Alternative Communication (ARASAAC).

ARASAAC, a website created by the Aragonese government of Spain, features a large collection of free software tools, clip art like pictures, and sounds that can be used to create a variety of resources, such as calendars, schedules, bingo cards, tables, and games, for special education teachers who work with people with communication disabilities. This site includes 14056 color pictograms, 11927 black and white pictograms, 1427 photographs, 4111 LSE videos and 4113 color LSE videos. These materials are FREE and can be selected and used as online software

tools. Each online tool comes with a complete manual, and the site includes examples of use. All of these resources are downloadable.

They provide many of the same functions as Microsoft office or other software packages, are easy to use, offer a complete manual and examples, and the images are tailor-made for AAC resource creation, *i.e.*, the meaning of each image is simple and understandable. However, the online tools are limited to certain functions and intended only to create specific products. Also, the site translation is not complete so there are certain areas, like the education resource descriptions, that can be read only in Spanish. However, other areas are available in multiple languages. ARASAAC distinguishes itself in three ways: ease of use, a massive image library, and its price (free). It is easy to create calendars, schedules, bingo cards, or tables for a person with disabilities, using ARASAAC as well as other applications.

For more information, go to <http://www.catedu.es/arasaac/>

For a video example of some work created from the site go to:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nmDozbZv1cI>

New Resources for Students with Complex Learning Difficulties and Disabilities. The Schools Network Ltd Complex Learning Difficulties and Disabilities (CLDD) research project is designed to create information, assessment tools and inquiry frameworks to help educators engage students with CLDD in educational activities. Although the project at first glance seems like a purely academic enterprise, Schools Network researchers have created a series of concise, practical tools and briefings to give teachers well-tested methods of teaching students with CLDD.

There are three categories of resources: (1) CLDD briefings, (2) engagement profiles and scales, and (3) inquiry frameworks. These resources can help answer important questions like, “How can I change this activity to make a child more curious?” The project website reinforces methods with tips on how to use tools and gives examples of project resources in real life. This website can also prove very useful for teachers who are too busy to peruse many academic journals, but need useful information to improve the performance of students with CLDD.

Go to <http://complexld.ssatrust.org.uk/>

Skoog. This is a completely new kind of musical instrument with lots of instruments/sounds available within a multicoloured box. The Skoog is designed to empower those unable to play traditional instruments. It is a soft, squeezable object that simply plugs straight into your computer or laptop's USB port. By touching, pressing, squashing, twisting or tapping the Skoog, people can play a wide range of instruments intuitively. Go to www.skoogmusic.com. For more information, go to www.logan-technologies.co.uk and look for FAB under products



The **FAB** is a unique low-tech device that can be used anywhere, even in the bath! The range of FAB spelling boards, are developed from experience at Frenchay Hospital. For years, patients have used key guarded, static alphabet boards in the hospital or as a secondary aid to high tech devices.



Kilometres for Communication was initiated by three people: Kerr Wattie, Skye Wattie and Gail Fisher-Taylor. Kerr is an artist, activist and presenter. He speaks using AAC. Kerr knows from personal experience that there are misconceptions about people without speech. He also knows about the exclusion and isolation that can result. Kerr's proactive younger brother came up with the idea to cycle across Canada to meet with alternative communicators, raise awareness and funds. Skye is presently cycling from coast to coast across Canada. You can follow his journey and blog at <http://kilometresforcommunication.com>

Communication without speech: Practical augmentative and alternative communication, edited by Helen Cockerill and Lesley Carroll-Few, is about children with physical and learning disabilities who fail to develop sufficient speech for successful communication. The book identifies ways in which these children can communicate, describing alternative and augmentative communication (AAC) approaches. The book is for doctors and health care professionals who may have no prior knowledge of the field.

<http://www.fishpond.com.au/Books/Communicating-without-Speech-Helen-Cockerill-Lesley-Carroll-Few/9781898683254?cf=3>

Other Ways of Speaking, by the Communication Trust in the United Kingdom, is an excellent, simple, clear, colorful 52-page booklet that introduces the basic ideas of AAC. The contents include sections on

1. Why should I read this booklet?
2. How does communication work?
3. What is Augmentative and Alternative Communication?
4. What are some of the different ways to support speech?
5. What are the benefits of using alternative ways to communicate?
6. How can I support someone who uses Augmentative and Alternative Communication?

You can download this publication from

<http://www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk/~media/Communication%20Trust/Documents/Other%20Ways%20of%20Speaking%20FINAL.ashx>

The QIAT Listserv is the oldest community of practice in assistive technology. This listserv is extremely active. Currently, over 1,000 individuals participate in this online community. Among the unique features are the availability of a daily digest of messages and a searchable archive of

over 10,000 messages (by title, author, topic, and keyword). The QIAT Listserv is hosted at the University of Kentucky. Go to the QIAT web site: <http://www.qiat.org>

I am told that a blog is often a mixture of what is happening in a person's life and what is happening on the *Web*. *It's a kind of diary and informational guide. And there are as many unique types of blogs as there are people.* Two of our network friends, Joanne Fry and Cate Crowley, write blogs which we can all share. Their blogs tell of their AAC experiences as well as their friendships and daily living in different countries and cultures. Enjoy!

www.aacineastafrica.blogspot.com will tell you of Joanne's experiences in Tanzania and Kenya. Not only will you be able to read about the AAC workshop Joanne gave in Mombasa but you can also read about her train journey, the new friends she met during her travels, animal life and the recreational activities which are enjoyed by everyone. They share their experiences at <http://ghana-slp-2011.blogspot.com/>

Cate also blogs from Bolivia when she takes students from her bi-lingual, bi-cultural SLP Master's program there every June. See <http://www.tc.columbia.edu/news/article.htm?id=6409>)

Communication Crossroads is a specialized, speech and language private practice designed to serve children with autism, Asperger's Syndrome, and related social learning disabilities, *etc.* from birth to adolescence, as well as their families, and those involved in their care (clinicians, educators, and paraprofessionals). Communication Crossroads has an excellent e-newsletter available online at: <http://www.commxroads.com/>

The Barrier Free Healthcare Initiative provides resources on its web site specifically addressing health care access for people with disabilities, including listing some common barriers faced by people with disabilities. <http://thebarrierfreehealthcareinitiative.org>.

Autism Connects Tanzania was created to help support families of children with autism by providing education, resources, and advocacy support. <http://autismconnectstanzania.webs.com:80/>

Pogo Boards. Talk To Me Technologies has launched "Pogo Boards," a powerful, easy-to-use, board-making application to help you create and share communication boards and learning materials. Features include the world's largest selection of picture communication symbols, many different templates for devices and activities, integrated Google image searching, and easy access to thousands of boards, therapy materials, *etc.* that have already been created and shared. www.pogoboards.com

Tots-N-Tech <http://tnt.asu.edu/home> is a research institute that carries out various studies to identify the prevalence and use of Assistive Technology (AT) with infants and toddlers. Over a 5 year period, T-N-T has conducted numerous studies to identify how AT is used, the types of devices used, and the timing of use and what characteristics supported families and providers in their use of AT with infants and toddlers.

You can subscribe to the newsletters by sending an e-mail to Jill.McLeod@jefferson.edu with the message subject: "subscribe tnt" and in the body of the message include the e-mail address to which you would like the newsletter sent.

Some newsletter topics have been:

June 2010: [Using assistive technology to support socialization](#)

March 2010: [Using arms and hands in activities and routines](#)

May 2009: [Positioning and Mobility: The Basics](#)

March 2009: [Augmentative and Alternative Communication: The Basics](#)

January 2009: [Switches: The Basics](#)

September 2008: [Ideas to Share Contest](#)

July 2008: [Resources about using Adaptations and AT with Babies](#)

One section, "Ideas to Share" has been contributed by people working with young children in early intervention programs. <http://tnt.asu.edu/home>

The Society of College National and University Libraries

(SCONUL) provides a comprehensive on-line book for Librarians. The book, which has been written to identify the needs of people with disabilities living in the United Kingdom, addresses the rights of library users, accessibility issues *etc.*

www.sconul.ac.uk/publications/pubs/access_disabilities.pdf

AGOSCI is a group representing people with complex communication needs, as well as those who live, know or work with people with complex communication needs.

AGOSCI aims to lobby for the rights of people with complex communication needs, increase public awareness of complex communication needs, and to provide relevant educational and professional development events across Australia. This site provides reports of conferences, publication lists and articles written by people who rely on augmentative communication.

<http://www.agosci.org.au/>

HelpKidzLearn is a web site full of free software and resources from Inclusive Technology.

<http://www.helpkidzlearn.com/>

The people at **Everyone Communicates** believe that everyone communicates, in one way or another and that communication is a basic need in life. When an individual does not have fluent, natural speech, it is urgent that other methods of communication, often called augmentative or alternative communication (AAC), be explored exhaustively.

<http://everyonecommunicates.org/resources/partners.html>

Abilis Foundation promotes activities, human rights, equal opportunities and independent living for people with disabilities in developing countries. The Foundation receives the funding from the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs Development Cooperation Fund. The Foundation funds small (between 1,000 and 20,000 Euro) trustworthy and high-quality projects planned and implemented by people with disabilities to promote

empowerment and social integration. Funding is granted to grass roots organizations.

http://www.abilis.fi/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=11&Itemid=325&lang=en

*Finally, there is a new 'literacy' resource available from the AAC-RERC and Penn State University in the U.S.. Developed by Drs. Janice Light and David McNaughton, the **ALL Curriculum** helps young children with autism, Down syndrome and other developmental disabilities affecting speech learn to read.*

<http://aacliteracy.psu.edu>

The Centre for Augmentative & Alternative Communication at the University of Pretoria, South Africa, is committed to making a difference in the communication and life-skills of people with severe disabilities, and in particular those with complex communication needs. The Centre shares excellent downloads at <http://www.caac.up.ac.za/downloads.htm>

The [Simon Technology Center](#) helps children and adults with disabilities and their families use assistive technology to improve their lives. The Simon Technology center believes that technology allows children and adults with disabilities to keep pace with a rapidly changing world by providing opportunities for communication, education, recreation, employment, and independence. Many downloads are free. <http://www.pacer.org:80/publications/stc.asp>

AdaptedLearning provides a site for sharing teaching resources. Along with the usual worksheets and stories, this month's issue highlights a [PBS Teachers Tip Sheet](#) on integrating multimedia resources into the classroom. [Getting Started](#) describes a simple, electronic book that was created with the talking book template. The book describes how certain animals prepare for the winter season and consists of 20 page layouts with simple text, graphics, and photos. The book can be read with prerecorded narration or text-to-speech. And the site's [Pick from the Web: Tips for a Happy Holiday](#) comes from the Autism Society website and features "Twelve Tips for Helping People with Autism and Their Families Have a Happy Holiday." (www.AdaptedLearning.com)

Bridge School News is designed to form a 'bridge' between home and school. A recent edition provided the following resources: **Tux Paint** is a free drawing program that combines an easy to-use interface with sound effects. Download the software for your Mac, Windows or Linux based system and have fun. It is great when paired with a touch screen or switches for cause & effect creations. (Thanks to J. Cheung for this recommendation.) www.tuxpaint.org

EduWeb develops digital games and interactive learning environments for museums and other public institutions (e.g., Minnesota Zoo and Museum of Science & Industry). The company makes their products available on this site for everyone to use. Explore four learning environments – role playing, creation, deduction and tinkering. <http://www.eduweb.com/>

Babylon is a useful, intuitive dictionary and translation tool for use with a computer. Babylon translates 75 languages and offers a free download programme. <http://www.babylon.com/affiliates/landing/index.php?id=9606>

Sparklebox is a great site for teachers. Provides teaching plans, worksheets, fun and seasonal activities, e-books *etc.* in English and other languages. <http://www.sparklebox.co.uk/index.html>

Living made easy for children is an impartial advice and information website about daily living equipment and other aspects of independent living. The site has been created by a team of occupational therapists who do not sell equipment for children with disabilities, but who do give advice on daily living equipment. www.livingmadeeasy.org.uk

Unlimiter is an Assistive Technology Engineering Lab in Taiwan. The site, available in English and basic Chinese, describes symbol systems, communication boards and adaptive technology. *Communication without Speech*, Anne Warrick's basic introduction to AAC in the ISAAC Series, is now available in basic Chinese (as well as Spanish and English) as a download from ISAAC (free to ISAAC members). (<http://www.isaac-online.org/en/publications/buy/books.php>). Many thanks to our Taiwanese colleagues for their help in making this translation a reality. <http://en.unlimiter.com.tw/>

Teaching Learners with Multiple Special Needs. This site provides resources and ideas for teachers of learners with severe, profound, intensive, significant, complex or multiple special needs. This is a 'friendly' site with excellent information and tips. For example: "Free and Low Cost Head Tracking Software (note head trackers can usually track any body part and more so if you put reflective tape, shiny nail polish or an LED on that body part)." <http://teachinglearnerswithmultipleneeds.blogspot.com/2009/10/free-and-low-cost-head-and-eyetracking.html>

Selected Links to Assistive Technology and Augmentative Communication Resources for Children with Disabilities. This web site provides a table that is sorted by topic then listed alphabetically below within the table. <http://www.lburkhart.com/links.htm>

Educational and Assistive Technology to support Universal Access and Universal Design for Learning: This site is a result of a collaboration between [Center for Literacy and Disability Studies](#) and the department of [Computer Science](#) at the [University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill](#). Tar Heel Reader, provides a collection of free, easy-to read, and accessible books on a wide range of topics. The books may be downloaded as slide shows in PowerPoint, Impress, or Flash format. Each book can be speech enabled and accessed using multiple interfaces, including touch screens, the IntelliKeys with custom overlays, and 1 to 3 switches. Great fun demonstrations (Reading with Franz) using puppets to describe various access methods. <http://www.paulhami.edublogs.org/>

The University of Washington, USA.

This university site has information to dispel myths and misunderstandings about assistive technology (AT) and augmentative and alternative communication (AAC), and the many beliefs that create barriers for AAC & AT users of all ages. http://depts.washington.edu/enables/myths/myths_intro.htm

Another section introduces the topic further and tackles myths head on by presenting stories that help to dispel and reduce barriers to the introduction of AAC.

http://depts.washington.edu/enables/myths/myths_aac_intervention.htm

AAC APPS

TouchChat HD Lite (<http://www.silver-kite.com/touchChat>).

What is it? *TouchChat HD Lite* is a non-communicative configuration of TouchChat HD that allows for the user interface experience, but does not include speech synthesis or any type of audio playback capabilities.

How much is it? \$9.99

Platforms: iPad, iPhone and iPod Touch

Reviews: Bridging Apps reports, *“This lite version of TouchChat is a great introduction to the AAC world of apps, but does not include audio playback or speech synthesis. The lite version is best used for trial purposes to see if the features may be helpful for a particular user.”*

Comapp (<https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/comapp/id442992034?mt=8>)

What is it? *Comapp*’s main purpose is to let non-verbal children communicate what they want quickly and easily. However, it can also be used as part of a child’s ABA therapy to teach basic language skills.

How much is it? Free

Platforms: iPad, iPhone and iPod Touch

Reviews: According to iTunes customer reviews, *“I found out about this at an autism conference and have been on a waiting list. Although the video that they showed was impressive, the actual app is smashing! I can’t wait until they release the full version. It will be amazing to be able to use my own photos for my son.”*

Locabulary Lite (<http://locabulary.com/>)

What is it? *Locabulary* is an app developed for communication, information, and fun. Words are made available based on your GPS location. With Locabulary, you can easily speak the right words in the right place.

How much is it? Free

Platforms: iPhone, iPod touch, and iPad

Reviews: Rated as number 4 in about.com's list of the top 10 apps for assistive technology

More updates on apps and other AAC/AT information can be found on Laurent S. Enders website. <http://pinterest.com/lasenders>

Apps: An Emerging Tool for SLPs: A plethora of apps are available to develop expressive, receptive, and other language and communication skills. You can find a list at the following website.

<http://www.asha.org/Publications/leader/2011/111011/Apps--An-Emerging-Tool-for-SLPs/>

The Ongoing AAC Apps Story. The RERC is committed to addressing the needs of people with complex communication needs. Recently an AAC-RERC White Paper was prepared and is available at www.aacrerc.com. This paper is based on interviews of many AAC stakeholders and addresses issues, concerns and opportunities related to the use of mobile technologies and AAC Apps.

Spectronics is Australia and New Zealand’s largest supplier of special needs software and assistive technologies. Spectronics staff prefer to think of their interest as “inclusive learning technologies”, that is those technologies which foster real success and inclusion in educational or community-based settings. Their team is made up of staff from teaching, speech pathology, occupational therapy, and technical backgrounds.

They work closely with a wide network of professionals and technology users to provide quality support to both education and disability groups throughout Australia, New Zealand and South East Asia.

The spectronics website <http://www.spectronicsinoz.com/article/iphoneipad-apps-for-aac> offers a chart of Apps for the iPhone and iPad. The chart is divided into three application areas: (1) Apps with symbols/pictures only; (2) Apps for symbols and text-to-speech and (3) Apps for text only. Some Apps are free, others are inexpensive. Of particular interest is **Verbally**, a free text to speech apps with word prediction and phrases. Also available free are **Small Talk** apps for Aphasia, conversational phrases, activities, dysphagia and intensive care facilities.

App	Price \$AUD	Price \$USD	iPhone/iPod touch	iPad*	Symbol System	Pre-programmed pages and customisation	Voice Output/ Speech	Access options	My Rating#
Apps with Symbols and Text-to-Speech									
AutoVerbal GirlTalk  v1.0	\$12.99	\$9.99	Y	Y	A range of clip art and words as buttons.	Can customize what some buttons “say” but cannot add your own buttons. Word/phrases do not go into the message window. Has a message window with a pop up keyboard for typing your own text to be converted to speech.	Female synthesised speech	Direct access	☆☆
AutoVerbal GuyTalk  v1.0	\$12.99	\$9.99	Y	Y	A range of clip art and words as buttons.	Can customize what some buttons “say” but cannot add your own buttons. Word/phrases do not go into the message window. Has a message window with a pop up keyboard for typing your own text to be converted to speech.	Male synthesised speech	Direct access	☆☆
AutoVerbal Talking Soundboard PRO 	\$23.99	\$19.99	Y	Y	A range of clip art and words as buttons.	Can customize what some buttons “say” but cannot add your own buttons. Has a message window with a pop up keyboard for typing your own text to be converted to speech and a second message window that words and phrases go	Male or female synthesised speech. Better quality speech when device is on internet.	Direct access	☆☆



A T Mac: Empowering Disabled Apple Users. This website covers all Apple products with a slant towards disability. This website is about users with a disability, adaptive and assistive technology, and making accessible programs and content. I aim to cover all Apple products including all Mac OS X computers – the iMac, MacBook, Mac Mini, Mac Pro, and older models; the iPod range; the iPhone and iPod Touch/iTouch; the iPad range; and other products such as the Apple TV and Apple’s remote controls, mice and keyboards. <http://atmac.org/about>

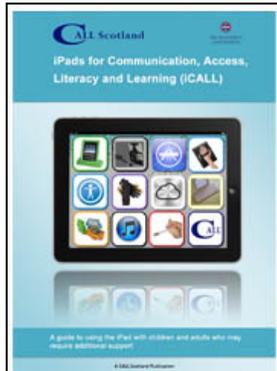
iPad, iPod and iPhone: What Can I Say? A presentation from B E T T 2011. On the 12th January, Will Wade, Occupational Therapist, ACE Centre, UK, gave a rather rapid overview of using iOS devices in the field of AAC. The presentation is available here for your viewing pleasure but do note you will need about an hour to watch it! Will also expands on video by writing down the main aspects of the presentation - with the ability to download some of the resources and follow the links.

<http://www.communicationmatters.org.uk/news-item/2011-video-aac-apps-ipad-ipodiphone>

FREE RESOURCES

iPads for Communication, Access, Literacy and Learning (iCALL)

By Craig Mill and CALL Team



Contents	
Introduction	
Chapter 1: Getting to grips with the iPad	
Chapter 2: Apps to support teaching and learning	
Chapter 3: Accessibility Options	
Chapter 4: iPad Accessories	
Chapter 5: iPad Resources	
Chapter 6: iPad in Assessments and Exams.....	
Chapter 7: Managing and Implementing the iPad	
Glossary of Terms	
Appendix 1: iPad Management using iTunes: some useful tips.....	

Published by CALL Scotland,
The University of Edinburgh

[www.callscotland.org.uk http://www.callscotland.org.uk/Common-Assets/spaw2/uploads/files/iPads-for-Communication-Access-Literacy-and-Learning.pdf](http://www.callscotland.org.uk/Common-Assets/spaw2/uploads/files/iPads-for-Communication-Access-Literacy-and-Learning.pdf)

Free and downloadable. This 121 manual is an invaluable resource.

Be patient when you download it. It takes a long time, but it's worth it.

www.bethmoulam.com

Beth Moulam, a young adult from UK who uses AAC, gave the opening speech at the rooftop party at the ISAAC biennial conference in Pittsburgh this summer .Her web site has many interesting components. While still a “work in progress”, many parts of the site are available and ready to be shared with family members, people who use AAC, professionals, advocates and policy makers.

www.communicationmatters.org.uk

For recent and past abstracts from Communication Matters Conferences and how to receive CM enews.

www.priorywoods.middlesbrough.sch.uk

For free downloadable resources.

www.augresources.com

For free downloads. *Using Visual Strategies to Improve Behaviour.*

www.praacticalaac.blogspot.co.uk

For abstracts from ISAAC Pittsburgh

www.patientprovidercommunication.org

For information, resources and presentations about supporting communication across healthcare settings.

Forming Links between Special Education and Education in Healthcare. I travel to Romania, Poland and Serbia as Senior Representative to Eastern and Central Europe for the Central Coast Children's Foundation. Our international collaborations started through requests to support communication enhancement in special education and have now expanded to include patient- provider communication and preparation for medical encounters.

For information about this area, you can look at a Power Point presentation that is posted at:

http://www.patientprovidercommunication.org/files/Dot_fraser_serbia_ppc_powerpoint.pdf

1. Translation of AAC Materials

Communication Matters in the UK. I checked with **Communication Matters** (the UK Chapter of ISAAC) regarding making translations of their material available to others and have received this answer:

The Board of Trustees confirm that Communication Matters would normally grant permission for translation of materials providing:

- 1. Communication Matters receives a request for the translation of the publication(s) required.*
- 2. The translated material will be available free of charge (except for the cost of postage and packing).*
- 3. Communication Matters is acknowledged as the publisher of the original material, and www.communicationmatters.org.uk appears alongside the acknowledgement.*

4. A draft of the translated material is sent to Communication Matters prior to publication.

2. Widgit Boards to support patient provider communication

On the website www.widgit-health.com there is information about many projects and sets of symbols to prepare for a range of medical encounters. Take a look to see **if** what is available in your language. If you need another language, we can help discuss options for adding translations. You can find contact details on the Widgit health website and on their main website www.widgit.com

For example, check out all the *Bedside Phrases*: Being in a hospital setting can be a frightening experience. What if you cannot talk to your doctors or nurses? What if you cannot tell them important information? For a person with a communicative disability or someone who does not speak the native language, this is always a possibility and can lead to unnecessary pain and medical complications. As many readers of this newsletter are aware, the Central Coast Children's Foundation, utilizing research conducted in Australia, is helping make available 26 key phrases for use in hospital settings and bedside message boards that enable patients to communicate more effectively.

Widgit Health has recently created many of these new symbol boards in many different languages (approaching 30): All are FREE and available for download.

3. Communication Chart for Communication Partners.

I recently saw this chart on Facebook. It's a useful reminder, easily modified and personalized. It is a 4/x/6 index card template created by Lauren Enders, Feb 2013.

You can find it at <http://media-cache-ec3.pinimg.com/originals/ab/74/7b/ab747bcbf55b7832824b2c29c6b23754.jpg>

 I CAN communicate. Here's how to help me! <small>Please keep this card attached to my AAC system!</small>	 Do this...
⊘ DON'T do this... DON'T expect me to know how to communicate without first SHOWING ME HOW .	MODEL, MODEL, MODEL for me. Show me what to do before asking me to do it.
⊘ DON'T talk so much that you forget to let me talk.	✓ PRESUME MY COMPETENCE. I can do it!
⊘ DON'T prompt me every second. I need time.	✓ WAIT 10-20 seconds before re-prompting me. <small>Count in your head!</small>
⊘ DON'T teach me ONLY to request or communicate wants & needs. I have lots of other things to say.	✓ FOLLOW a prompt hierarchy, only going as far as I need. <small>(Here's one from Environmental Communication Teaching - Dr. George Karlan.)</small> 1. Pause. Focus your attention on me. Pause. 2. Ask me an OPEN-ENDED question. Pause. 3. Give me a partial prompt. Pause. 4. Request my response. Pause. 5. Give me a full model. Pause. Let me know what you heard and then model what I can add.
⊘ DON'T take away my device if I'm not cooperating. That's my voice!	✓ TEACH me to direct action, comment, reject & more. Besides wants & needs, I need to share my thoughts, worries, fears, and joys. I need to make friends and to become literate.
⊘ DON'T put words on my system that I won't use again.	✓ GIVE me CORE WORDS including verbs, describing words, and function words... NOT JUST NOUNS!
⊘ DON'T always stop me from "babbling" or exploring my device by pushing buttons. I need time to learn.	✓ COLOR CODE parts of speech for me.
⊘ DON'T move my symbols. I need them to stay in the same spot so I can develop a motor plan.	✓ MAKE SURE I have access to my words at ALL TIMES .
⊘ DON'T leave my system in my desk, cubby, or backpack.	✓ PROVIDE aided language input. <small>USE SYMBOLS when talking to me!</small>
⊘ DON'T expect me to talk in sentences right away. No one else does when they learn to talk!	

This 4x6 index card template was created by Lauren Enders, MA, CCC-SLP with content by Lauren Enders, Pat Mervine, Melissa Skocypiec, & Cathie VanAlstine. Use the back of this card for important information about the way I communicate, my preferences, and my dislikes. The idea for the card was suggested by Maureen Welch of www.coalifcolorado.com.

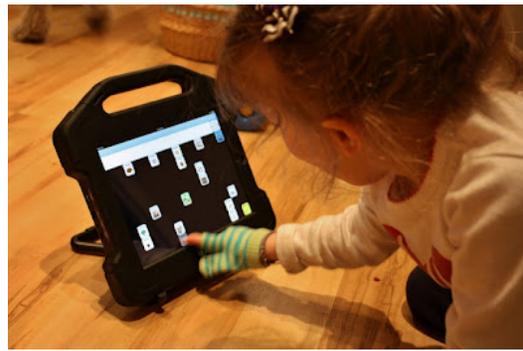
4. For people with motor impairments. My projects are interdisciplinary. I have collected many ideas to assist people with motor impairments to communicate. For example, sometimes it's quite difficult for some children to use a "talker" because it's difficult to point accurately. In a March 2012 blog, a mom shared how she helped her daughter Maya use the iPad for communication. Go to <http://niederfamily.blogspot.com/2012/03/necessity-is-mother-of-invention.html> for a step-by-step description of a simple solution that worked.



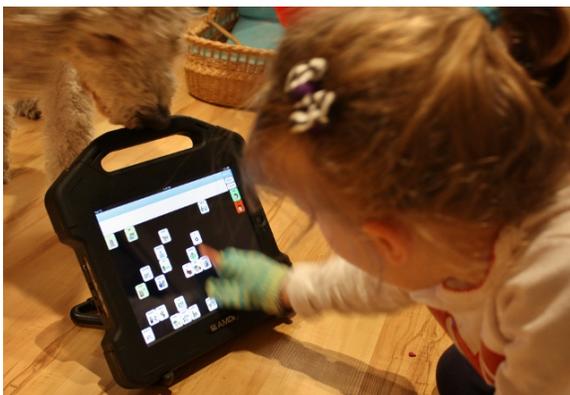
First, you need a pair of gloves that fits your kid and a pair of scissors. Cut the index finger off of the gloves. The gloves won't activate the screen. Adults in cold climates are all too familiar with this, as you can't use your touchscreen phone with gloves unless you have [special gloves](#). So the only part of her hand that can now effectively touch a button is her index finger.



Three fingers on the screen can't hit any buttons.



Using her pointer finger to hit a button.



This is the best picture, because her knuckles and the heel of her hand are actually resting on the iPad, but not activating any buttons! She's able to take the time to line up her index finger and hit the button that she is intending to. Success!

Involve Me is a unique and practical guide about how to involve people with profound and multiple learning disabilities (PMLD) in decision-making and consultation. *Involve Me* aims to:

- increase the involvement of people with PMLD in decision-making and consultation
- keep a very practical focus
- support long-term change for people with PMLD and the way services are designed, planned and delivered.



http://www.mencap.org.uk/sites/default/files/documents/Involve%20Me%20practical%20guide_full%20version.pdf

www.ace-north.org.uk

The ACE Centre works with people of all ages to provide help and expertise in the field of Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) and Assistive Technology (AT). The Centre's team of therapists, teachers and technicians provide a range of core specialist services including assessments, equipment loans, training and information. They also undertake project and consultancy work. Sadly, The ACE Centre South (in Oxford) was recently closed unexpectedly. To read about the government's withdrawal of funding, go to <http://www.ace-north.org.uk/ACECentreAdvisoryTrust.asp>

www.communicationmatters.org.uk

Communication Matters, the UK branch of ISAAC, offers much useful information on AAC. Their web site has a valuable feature: when you position the cursor (mouse) over any word (within the main text, not a menu or sidebar) and leave it there for a few seconds, an image appears that graphically describes what the word is (as if it turns into a communication board). The web site has useful free downloads and shares research and other related journals.

www.callscotland.org.uk

CALL Scotland (CALL- Communication, Access, Literacy and Learning) is a part of the Moray House School of Education at the University of Edinburgh. CALL's web site contains many practical ideas adaptable to situations in emerging areas.

www.wordtalk.org.uk

This web site is about WordTalk, a free text-to-speech plug-in that will speak the text of the document and will highlight it as it goes. It contains a talking dictionary to help decide which word spelling is most appropriate and is developed for all versions of Microsoft Word. This software was developed by a Scottish teacher who noted that children with reading and writing difficulties often benefit from having text read aloud to them. Following the highlighted text as one hears it spoken has been shown to reinforce sight reading skills in many circumstances.

www.appsforaac.net

This website is a good place to find out about apps for AAC. They have a "Full List" of AAC apps (including over 50 that are free) that is organized by category, speech system and symbol system used. The web site offers a comparison page where one can pick specific apps to view and compare side by side. New apps are listed at the bottom of the homepage, with snapshots and descriptive captions for each.

www.helpkidzlearn.com

This web site includes free software and resources from Inclusive Technology, which include many apps that are intended to 'help kids learn.' The apps and services are arranged into the following categories: early years, games, stories, creative, find out. There is also a section for parents. They offer free membership for access to their newsletters and information on upcoming and recent additions to their web site/toolkit.

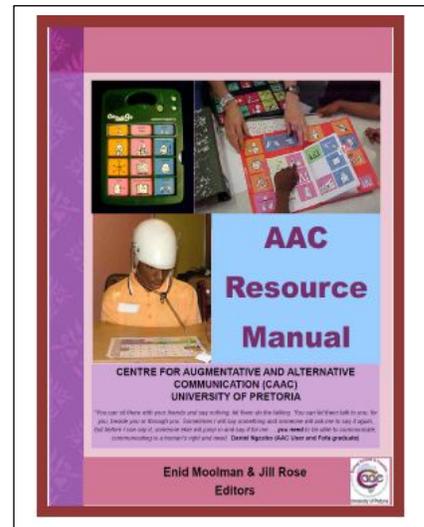
www.bagbooks.org

This web site describes Bag Books, the "only organization in the world that publishes multi-sensory books specifically for people with learning disabilities." This UK organization mainly designs and produces a wide range of multi-sensory books that are age-appropriate stories (each book takes an average of 8 hours to construct). Bag Books also provides specialist multi-sensory storytelling sessions and training to parents, professionals, librarians and teachers on multi-sensory storytelling. They offer these books online, as well as other disability resources, and use the web site as a donation platform as well.

Launching the AAC Resource Manual

The AAC Resource Manual was launched at the Second African Regional AAC conference. With contributions by all the staff members of the Centre for AAC along with local experts, including AAC users, the 14 chapters of the manual provide a framework for exploring practical AAC interventions which are intended to fill the gap between theory and practice gap. More info from: saak@up.ac.za.

The resource manual, published in book and CD format, is the beginning of a journey and it is envisaged that it will become a “living document”. New chapters or sections of chapters will be added annually. The manual is a major step forward in ensuring that the message that “all can communicate” becomes a reality.



For much more information about the conference go to

<http://web.up.ac.za/sitefiles/file/46/9742/October%202011%20Interface%20Newsletter.pdf>

<http://web.up.ac.za/sitefiles/file/46/9742/October%202011%20Interface%20Newsletter.pdf>

NEWSLETTERS FROM AROUND THE WORLD

Deepshikha: Indian Institute of Cerebral Palsy www.iicpindia.org/PDF/DS.pdf

Interface - AAC South Africa. <http://www.interface-sa.org.za/news.html>

The Bridge School Newsletter: www.bridgeschool.org

ACCPC: Communication Access to Goods and Services

The **Augmentative Communication Community Partnerships CANADA (ACCPC)** has posted a new section on their website. It focuses on how to improve communication accessibility in the community. This is a human rights issue and is another portion of their important work on Social Justice issues for people with speech and language challenges. The site is full of practical information and helpful materials. You can download and use. Also, great for training.

<http://www.accpc.ca>.

For people with speech or language disabilities, access is about communication.

Do any of your customers or clients

- Speak in a way that is hard for you to understand?
- Use a communication board or device?
- Have difficulty finding the words they want to say?
- Have difficulty understanding what you are saying?

Learn what you can do to make your organization accessible for people who have speech or language disabilities.

www.communication-access.org

Communicating Matters ACCPC www.accpc.ca

This communication access project is funded in part by the Government of Canada's Social Development Partnerships Program - Disability Component.

Augmentative Communication Community Partnerships Canada (ACCPC) is a Canadian, non-profit organization that provides assistance for people who have speech or language disabilities.

A preschool AAC checklist by Judy Henderson from Stanford Med
(<http://med.stanford.edu/ataac/judy.html>)

Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) Low-Tech Toolkit (2009)

SET-BC developed the AAC Low-Tech Toolkit to support teachers and speech-language pathologists. Choosing and developing an augmentative and alternative communication system may seem like a daunting task. However, by starting slowly and exploring the student's communication needs and skills you will begin to find your way to the best AAC solution. Students who require augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) should have a "non-technical" or "low-technical" system. www.setbc.org

Widgit Symbol Resource Packs

Widgit, in partnership with many professionals, has created hundreds of free and low-cost resource packs. **Widgit** produces a wide range of symbol-supported learning materials and symbol stories, including extensive topic-based packs 'ready to go' for special and mainstream education, developed by the Symbol Inclusion Project. The Symbols Inclusion Project (SIP) is collaboration between Widgit Software and Warwickshire IDS (Integrated Disability Service) on the use of symbols to support inclusion and curriculum access. The purpose is to create genuinely inclusive learning environments for all children and young people. Find out more: www.symbolsinclusionproject.org.



Symbols Inclusion Project (SIP) **Resources and strategies for supporting inclusion**

The Symbols Inclusion Project (SIP) is a collaboration between Widgit Software and Warwickshire IDS (Integrated Disability Service) on the use of symbols to support inclusion and curriculum access. The purpose is to create genuinely inclusive learning environments for all children and young people.

 **FREE and low-cost Resources to download and use in your school!**
[Full resource list](#)
Hundreds of symbol materials by subject

[Impact related to Every Child Matters](#)

[Case Studies on Teachers Practice](#)

[Communication Friendly Environments](#)

[Other symbol projects within Warwickshire](#)

[Site Map for the SIP site](#)



Emergency Communication4ALL

Communication during times of emergency is critical. However, many individuals may not communicate effectively due to their disability, injury, or shock. For others, their spoken language may not be effective because of language differences. Since communication is so important, Dian Bryen and her staff at Temple's Institute on Disabilities developed free downloadable communication aids in English, Spanish, and Haitian Creole. These aids can be used during times of emergency when spoken English, Spanish, or Haitian are not effective. These communication aids were developed in English in response to Hurricane Katrina along the Gulf Coast, in Spanish in response to the earthquake in Chile, and in Haitian Creole in response to the disaster in Haiti. As part of an AAC-RERC project, Diane researched what words are needed during and after emergencies. These words can be found at <http://disabilities.temple.edu/aacvocabulary/EMERGENCY.shtml>.

Tips for Emergency Response Personnel Interacting with Someone Who Needs Communication Assistance

In addition to the Emergency Communication 4 ALL communication aids, the Temple University website has some **Tips for Emergency Response Personnel Interacting with Someone Who Needs Communication Assistance**:

Note: Tips (and additional information) are also available from the AAC-RERC at <http://aacrerc.psu.edu/index.php/pages/show/id/18>

1. Begin by identifying basic communication methods (pay attention to pointing, gestures, nods, sounds, eye gaze and eye blinks)
 - o Take time to listen carefully.
 - o Give the person extra time to respond.
 - o Always repeat the person's actions and/or what they tell you to confirm that you have understood.
 - o Say, "Show me how you say YES."
 - o Say, "Show me how you say NO."
 - o Ask questions one at a time and ask questions that can easily be answered with a YES or NO response.
 - o Say, "Show me how you point to something or someone you want."
2. After communication methods have been identified, ask a few basic questions.
 - o "Is there someone here who can help me communicate with you?"
 - o "Do you have a communication board, communication book, or a speech generating device?"
 - o "Did you bring it with you?" If they indicate YES, ask them where it is and help them retrieve it.

If they indicate NO, show them the 2 **Emergency Communication 4 All** downloadable communication aids and ask them which one they want to use. Remember to ask simple questions that can be answered with a YES or NO.

NOTE: If a person is unable to point to a communication aid, someone can point to the communication aid for them (e.g., point to a picture, word, or letter on their board) and ask "Is this the picture (or word or letter) that you want?" Then wait for a YES or NO response. The person who is pointing should always confirm the correct choice before going on. For a video demonstration of this approach, click on this link:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pLb6-Oi3uR0>

To download the communication displays, go to
<http://disabilities.temple.edu/aacvocabulary/e4all.shtml>

For more information, go to <http://aac-lerc.psu.edu/index-46053.php.html>

Doorway Online is a collection of free learning activities originally developed with funding from Scottish Borders Council. The suite comprises highly accessible educational activities that learners will find easy to use independently. Each exercise has range of accessibility and difficulty options.

<http://www.doorwayonline.org.uk/>

The JISC (Joint Information Systems Committee) **Regional Support Centre Scotland North and East** provides advice and guidance on the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in education and acts as a gateway to JISC and its many services and initiatives. EduApps, one of their initiatives, consists of several useful software collections that are free to download and use. The newest of them, **Create&Convert** is a tool that brings together a range of free tools such as the open source software developed by the DAISY Consortium that can quickly and capably translate electronic documents into accessible alternative formats. <http://www.daisy.org/news-detail/826>

C A L L (Communication, Access, Literacy and Learning) Scotland, is a small unit within the Moray House School of Education, The University of Edinburgh. The CALL is both a Service and a Research Unit. Developed initially by Sally Millar, a new app for Communication Passports will be launched by Easter 2011. Easy to use, pages are presented in an index form and new pages can be created, edited and deleted as required. Each page can contain its own background image, text, images, recorded sound files, symbols and more. To be informed when it's released simply fill in the 'Register Your Interest' form.

<http://www.communicationpassports.org.uk/Home/>

A great place for downloads is **SWAAAC: Supporting Learning Through Assistive Technology** <http://www.swaaac.com/>

There are also PowerPoint presentations on the following topics and much more

· AAC Assessment http://www.swaaac.com/files/PPTs/1AAC_Assessment.ppt

Making Toy Adaptations <http://www.swaaac.com/files/PPTs/3MakingToyAdapations.ppt>

An Overview of Assistive Technology.

http://www.swaaac.com/files/PPTs/6Overview_ofAT.PPT

Picture Exchange Communication System <http://www.swaaac.com/files/PPTs/11PECS.ppt>

The **Enables** web site also discusses myths that surround AAC in relation to toddlers and preschoolers and provides videos of young children learning switch control, taking turns, using eye gaze and making requests for toys and music.

http://depts.washington.edu/enables/myths/myths_aac_inter_infants.htm

Reading and Writing: Assistive Tech for Learning Disability

<http://www.swaaac.com/files/PPTs/12TrainingTrainers0405.ppt>

The Indiana Resource Centre for Autism, USA.

An article for parents of children with Autism Spectrum Disorders, 'When Your Child is Diagnosed With An Autism Spectrum Disorder', is available in Spanish. You will find: Cuando su hijo es diagnosticado con un trastorno del espectro autista: Un recurso para las familias cuyo niño ha sido recién diagnosticado. <http://www.iidc.indiana.edu:80/irca/fspanish.html>

Novita Children's Services, Australia.

Novita is celebrating seventy years of caring for children with disabilities. What a great achievement! Novita's web site describes parents, carers and family members as the 'magic ingredient' in the life of a child with disability! These individuals often make it possible for the child to achieve extraordinary things despite their disability. Novita's web page '**Living with disability - parents and carers**' provides excellent resources for mothers, fathers and many other carers. <http://www.novita.org.au/Content.aspx?p=8>

Assistive Technology in the Schools <http://www.swaaac.com/files/PPTs/14ATpresentation.ppt>

The Childhood Apraxia of Speech Association of North America's (CASANA) mission is to strengthen the support systems in the lives of children with apraxia, so that each child has the best opportunity to develop speech. www.apraxia-kids.org This site also offers information for parents of children who may find AAC useful following a diagnosis of apraxia. See the **Family Start Guide**. <http://www.apraxiakids.org/site/apps/nlnet/content.aspx?c=chKMI0PIIsE&b=839037&ct=837215>

The **Apraxia Kids** web site states: 'Often when someone raises the idea of using sign language for a child with apraxia, parents may experience confusion and even fear. After all, "The child can hear just fine! Why would we use sign language for a hearing child?" Or "But won't using the sign mean my child won't need to talk? Won't it keep him/her from speaking?" Conversely, some parents report that their child's speech language pathologist has told them that the child will rely on sign and thus not learn to speak. The reference below refutes many of myths about signing by providing an article on the use of signing as a suitable communication mode.

<http://www.apraxiakids.org/site/c.chKMI0PIIsE/b.980831/apps/s/content.asp?ct=464165>

The WATI: Wisconsin Assistive Technology Initiative

<http://www.wati.org> is also a great source of free downloads. From the main page, pull down the Supports Menu and click on Free Publications or Classroom materials. The following is a list of just some of the materials available:

· Resource Guide for Teachers and Administrators about Assistive Technology

<http://wati.org/content/supports/free/pdf/ATResourceGuideDec08.pdf>

· Hey! Can I Try That? A Student Handbook for Choosing and Using AT

<http://www.wati.org/content/supports/free/pdf/HeyCanITryThat08.pdf>

Lista Comprobante de Asistencia Tecnológica

http://wati.org/content/supports/free/pdf/atlist_sp.pdf

· Guía de Consideración para Asistencia Tecnológica

http://wati.org/content/supports/free/pdf/at_conderation_sp.pdf

A Disability Resource Book for Teachers: How to Integrate Students with Physical Disabilities into Mainstream Schools. There are seven chapters in this book, which aims to help teachers meet the challenges of integration. It reflects the experiences faced by teachers and

other professionals when children with complex communication needs were integrated into mainstream schools in Singapore.

1. Inclusive Education.
2. Understanding Disabilities.
3. Assistive Technology.
4. Accessibility.
5. Integrating with People with Disabilities.
6. Challenges.
7. Community

Resources. http://www.spd.org.sg/form/SPD_Disability_Resource_Handbook_for_Teachers.pdf

Free books from SET-BC, Canada.

<http://www.setbc.org/setbc/accessiblebooks/freebooksforyou.html>

CELL: Centre for Early Literacy Learning: Practice Guides Especially for Practitioners

These guides can be used by early childhood educators, child care providers, early interventionists, and other early childhood practitioners for promoting infants', toddlers', and preschoolers' literacy learning using interest-based and highly engaging activities.

<http://earlyliteracylearning.org/pgpracts.php>

Sparadrap. This web site (in French) is an interesting example of a way to use the Internet to communicate to young patients in a way that can help improve patient care.

<http://www.sparadrap.org/>

dotSUB is a browser based tool enabling subtitling of videos on the web into and from any language. There is nothing to buy and nothing to download. Recognizing the potential of global communication powered by the Internet, the founders of dotSUB created a web-based tool that enables video to be accessed in an open, collaborative, "wiki" type environment. The dotSUB tool gives anyone the ability to translate video content into multiple languages via subtitles rendered over the bottom of the video. <http://dotsub.com>

The Call Centre provides expertise in technology for children who have speech, communication and/or writing difficulties in schools across Scotland, UK. Personal Communication Passports are a practical and person-centred way of supporting children, young people and adults who cannot easily speak for themselves. This web site aims to provide guidance on the creation and use of Passports. <http://www.communicationpassports.org.uk/Home/index.php>

There is a fringe vocabulary designed to meet an individual's interests, needs and varied environments. The importance of a communication partner is taught, through the guide, to use and model the symbols during communication and to support and scaffold the learners' own communication attempts. There are five sample downloadable pages from the communication book. <http://www.acecentre.org.uk/index.cfm?pageid=F93E8841-3048-7290-FEFC53EBB74035C>

PictureSET database of AAC resources. Includes sample AAC pages, overlays for devices, and teaching materials. Available at: <http://www.setbc.org/pictureset/category.aspx?id=2>.

Indoff and Vidatak E-Z Board.

Provides customized augmentative communication displays for the voice disabled in acute-care and other hospital settings. Picture Board languages include: English Spanish Vietnamese Korean Russian Tagalog Hindi Japanese Arabic Polish French Chinese Portuguese German Italian Indonesian and Farsi. <http://www.vidatak.com/>

The Indian Institute of Cerebral Palsy is a non-government organization aided by Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment. It is a national resource centre for cerebral palsy. IICP was started by parents and a group of concerned friends and has continued to center its vision and priorities on families and their needs. The Institute publishes a newsletter three times each year. <http://www.iicpindia.com/activities1.html>

<http://www.lospipitos.org> “We are a social-volunteer Association of parents, relatives and friends of children with deficiencies and/or disabilities working together in solidarity under the umbrella of Los Pipitos. Our objectives are to support the full and effective participation of people with disability in development and community life and to improve their rights and protect their dignity.”

<http://paulhami.edublogs.org/2009/05/15/kidoz/>

KIDO’Z is a web browser that is described by its developers as a “Kid’s Web Environment”. Once downloaded and installed, the browser offers a self contained web of games, websites and videos that are accessed with large icons. Because KIDO’Z is an Adobe Air application, it will run in Windows, Mac, or Linux. KIDO’Z comes with an extensive collection of games, videos, and websites built-in, and these appear to have been selected carefully. The beauty of this browser, however, is that you have the option of completely customizing what is available. The browser is managed by a set of Parental Controls that can be accessed anywhere. KIDO’Z is currently available in 17 languages.

<http://www.do2learn.com:80/> Do2Learn is an amazing site for finding information, interactive tools, and printable resources for your work with students who have autism or special needs. Along with information about a variety of learning disabilities, the site includes songs and games for teaching basic skills, printable social skill organizers, organizational tools, and picture cards. This site is a must-see for anyone who works with students who are on the autism spectrum or have learning disabilities. NOTE: Do2Learn charges for some resources and applications, but many of the resources on the site are free.

<http://www.aramedia.com/tts.htm> Text to Speech Sakhr TTS engine converts any Arabic/English text into a human voice. Sakhr has been focusing in the last 5 years on creating an Arabic TTS engine that can match in its quality the human voice. This technology gives businesses a competitive edge by allowing them to provide their customers with the latest static and dynamic information anytime, anywhere using normal telephones and mobiles. NOTE: it has also been used for augmentative communication.

AAC Assessment in Early Intervention includes a number of domains, including prelinguistic communication, parent inventories, functional communication, and environmental analysis. Several tools are required for completion within the first months of AAC EI practicum. The

programmes-mini web is designed to provide the resources needed to understand the usefulness of functional behavioural assessments and behavioural intervention plans in addressing student behavior problems. <http://cecp.air.org/fba/default.asp>

AAC Assessment from YAACK. If you like the sound of the following quotation from the YAACK website you may find their user-friendly AAC assessment meets your needs. Quote: "To determine the best AAC system for a child, it is necessary to conduct a comprehensive AAC assessment. This assessment needs to cover both characteristics of the child as well as the potential advantages and obstacles that exist in the environment. Ideally, it results in: 1) Deciding which of the child's current methods of communicating should be maintained and/or developed further. 2) Selecting new methods of communication, and determining the best way to implement them and 3) Making changes and adaptations in the environment and in the way people interact with the child. <http://aac.unl.edu/yaack/c0.html>

Augmentative Communication News Volume 7 # 1 addresses the question of AAC assessment. The publication provides the view of clinicians when they were asked to respond to a list of questions, tools and desired outcomes of AAC assessments. Many thanks to Sarah. We can all read this copy of AC News at http://augcominc.com/index.cfm/article_7_1_aac_assessment.htm

Thanks to Alicia Garcia (Canada) for the following reference. The Mission of the Wisconsin Assistive Technology Initiative is to assist school districts and Birth to 3 programs in their responsibility to ensure that every child in Wisconsin who may need assistive technology (AT) has equal and timely access to appropriate assessment and the provision and implementation of needed AT devices and services. Assessing Students' Needs for Assistive Technology: A Resource Manual for School District Teams is an extensive manual developed by the WATI during the past fifteen years. The manual contains evaluation information, evaluation forms, bibliography and references. Access the manual directly at <http://www.wati.org/content/supports/free/pdf/ASNAT4thEditionDec08.pdf>

Bedtime Reading:

AC World Network is supporting the emergence of AAC in many countries. But it's good to remember that AAC itself has emerged over the past forty years. Was there really a voice output device as big as a kitchen cupboard? Gregg Vanderheiden, one of the people at the forefront of AAC training and assistive technology development, has written an interesting article on the history of AAC. You can read about equipment and original beliefs that have changed and other AAC intervention ideas that remain as valid today as they were many years ago.

<http://www.rehab.research.va.gov/jour/02/39/6/sup/vanderheiden.html>

<http://www.dinf.ne.jp/doc/english/asia/resource/apdrj/z13jo0400/z13jo0405.html> An article which describes AAC in India.

<http://commtechlab.msu.edu/sites/aslweb/browser.htm> This website has a long list of words on the right side, and when you click on a word a video displays how to say that word in American Sign Language (ASL). It's free and could be useful for those who need to communicate with people who sign.

<http://www.speechville.com/augmentative-communication/aac-videos.html> offers videos demonstrating the use of AAC.