

CDP Update



Feature Devices • Tech Tips • Clinical Practice

FALL 2020

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Communication Device Spotlight



Low Cost Symbol Based AAC Apps for iOS

We get quite a few questions about free and low cost apps available for clients to put on personal devices and/ or phones. Below is a list of a few of the low cost symbol based apps that we have explored. This list is definitely not exhaustive and is frequently changing, so please connect with your Speech-Language Pathologist for the most up to date information. In addition, since we don't typically have many free and/or low cost apps in our inventory, we may not be aware of all the good ones out there! If you know of a good free/ low cost app for AAC, please tell us about it! Also, keep in mind there are often sales in October, which is AAC Awareness Month, if you are looking to privately purchase a more robust app!

App	Pros	Cons	Cost
Chatterboards AAC 	4 modifiable pre-made boards including a core board with a QWERTY keyboard	Each new button/ folder needs full programming (text, voice output, symbol, etc)	Free
Let Me Talk 	Multiple languages, premade categories, & voice auto populated with programming	No keyboard, delete button only deletes one symbol at a time.	Free
SymboTalk 	Pre-programmed options, multiple languages	Confusing to use!	Free
Bridge Communication Lite 	Has Symbolstix, add buttons using photos or video from your camera roll	Few language options (Spanish & English), some programming limitations.	\$39.99

You may also want to review the BridgingApps site. It has many, many apps listed, and you can search based on all sorts of different criteria. The link provided will take you to AAC specific apps, but all manner of apps are included on this site! <https://search.bridgingapps.org/lists/28a0e322-05f8-4823-b9a9-332447642d2b>



CALL Scotland always has wonderful information about available AAC apps as well . Check them out here: <https://www.callscotland.org.uk/downloads/posters-and-leaflets/ipad-apps-for-complex-communication-support-needs/>



Communication, Access, Literacy and Learning

Consider these basic apps for clients who:

- Would prefer to use a smart phone, rather than a tablet (** CDP **does not** provide smart phones)
- Prefer to own and use a personal tablet or smart phone rather than rent from the CDP

Access and Selection Method Spotlight



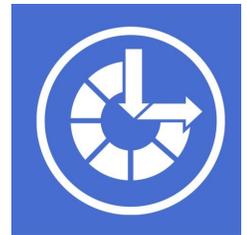
Access is so basic

We realized that we ran a newsletter with basic Communication Devices, but we've never pointed out some of the most basic options for Access. The ones that are already built right into the operating system of the device you are using! These can be so helpful for in the moment assessment and intervention.

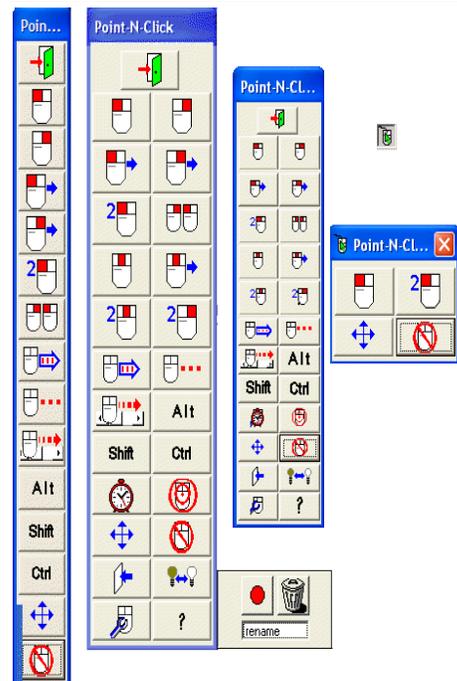


Mac OS Accessibility Settings: <https://www.apple.com/ca/accessibility/mac/>
iOS and iPad OS Accessibility Settings: <https://www.apple.com/ca/accessibility/ipad/>
Apple offers suggestions based on the issues an individual is having with access, i.e. Vision, Hearing, Mobility, Learning. Within those categories, you can explore options and modifications that may help! Some of our go to accessibility features on iOS include: Assistive Touch and Switch Scanning.

Windows Accessibility Features: <https://www.microsoft.com/en-ca/accessibility/windows>
Windows offers accessibility in the categories of vision, hearing, learning, mobility, and they have also included neurodiversity. Settings you may find interesting in this category include: minimizing distractions (removing background images, simplifying the start menu), engage reading view, and text suggestions. The setting we use most often on Windows is cursor colour, size and speed adjustments.

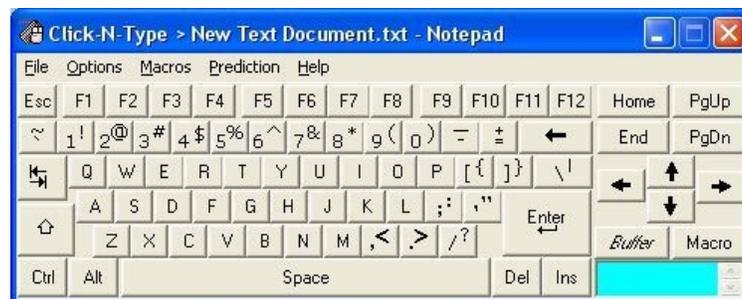


Even though the operating systems continue to have more and more accessibility features built-in, there are a few external programs that we like to use. **PLEASE be aware the following are third party software programs, always ensure your computer has virus scanning software and NEVER download anything you are uncomfortable with.**



Point-n-click virtual dwell clicking (pictured left): <https://polital.com/pnc/>

Click-n-Type onscreen keyboard (pictured below left): <https://cnt.lakefolks.com/>



Enormouse (pictured above right): <https://ul.gpii.net/content/enormouse>

Consider basic accessibility options for those clients that:

- Have fair to good access skills, but need a little support to become more efficient

Clinician's Corner - Spooky AAC

Was the Ouija Board the first AAC Device?

Just in time for the spookiest time of the year, we wanted to chat about Ouija boards! According to "A brief history of Ouija Boards" on the interweb ... "the history around the idea of using "talking boards" to communicate with spirits or ghosts is not easy to narrow down. Talking boards were popular in parts of Europe much earlier, before the concept took off in North America. There is no proof of when and where talking boards officially originated, but the Ouija boards that we are most familiar with nowadays started being produced in the late 1800s to early 1900s. During a time of heightened spiritualism, many people wanted to reach out and talk to loved ones who had passed on. Can we take a moment and give props to the inventors, whomever they were... This mysterious talking board is basically the same as a modern day communication



board. Seriously, it's a flat board with the letters of the alphabet arrayed in two semi-circles above the numbers 0 through 9; it also includes the words "yes" and "no" in the uppermost corners, and "goodbye" at the bottom. For our OT colleagues that read this newsletter, guess what? They even used alternate access, the board is accompanied by a planchette, a tear drop-shaped device, usually with a small window in the body, used to maneuver about the board. If you want more information about the history of the Ouija board check out this article: <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/the-strange-and-mysterious-history-of-the-ouija-board-5860627/> or if you want to ruin the magic and find out how the Ouija board really works, check out this article: <https://www.vox.com/2016/10/29/13301590/how-ouija-boards-work-debunked-ideomotor-effect>



If you are looking for a little more information about the history of AAC, you will want to check out this little article from ndi media: <http://www.ndimedia.com/a-history-of-augmentative-and-alternative-communication-aac-devices-part-1-the-pioneers/>

ISAAC Canada - New Executive Team

Recently ISAAC Canada formed a new Executive Team for 2020-2023 including:

President - Kathy Howry (AB)

Secretary - Lee Millar (SK)

Treasurer - Shaun Pearson (AB)

PWUAAC - Chelsea Hagen

Member without portfolio - Jocelyn Roberts (AB)

Member without portfolio - Stacey McRuer (MB)

A huge thank-you to the outgoing committee (2017-2020) including:

President - Louis Turner (BC)

Secretary - Monica Francella (BC)

Treasurer - Brigette Poirier (YK)

PWUAAC - Rand Surbey

Newsletter - Nicole Johnson (ON)

National Council Rep - Anne McCallum (BC)

Member without Portfolio - Stacey Harpell (BC)



Education & Resources

Skin Tone Options in AssistiveWare apps - Proloquo2Go & simPODD



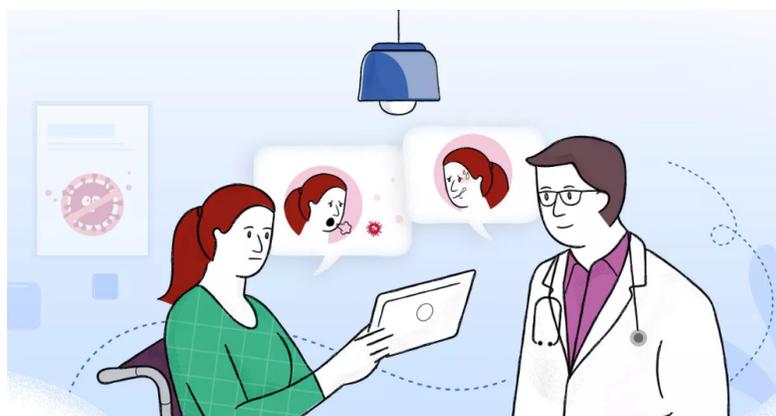
AssistiveWare has taken the first step and added an important community-requested feature to both simPODD and Proloquo2Go: quickly adjust all the skin tones throughout your vocabulary! Watch the quick video to the left to see how to easily make these system wide changes!



Using AAC in Hospital during COVID (and anytime really)!

Planning for AAC use in medical settings

Unfortunately, we continue to see rapid spread of the coronavirus. Often AAC users may be vulnerable and susceptible to infection. AAC users and their supporters need to make plans in the event that they must go to hospital or medical centers. AAC users will need access to their AAC in these settings. Research tells us that without access to AAC to communicate clearly in hospitals, people are at greater risk for negative outcomes (Bartlett et al, 2008). Here are some tips put together by AssistiveWare to help PWU AAC prepare in the event they may need to access a hospital or medical center:



1. **Document your need for AAC:** this could be as simple as a piece of paper with written information, or it could even be a medical alert bracelet.
2. **Disinfect your device regularly:** if in hospital as to speak to an IP&C professional for proper procedures while in hospital
3. **Ask to see a Speech-Language Pathologist (SLP):** if you don't have or cannot use your standard AAC while in hospital, an SLP is the professional that will help determine the appropriate method of communication
4. **Prepare back-up AAC:** Is appropriate, you can take a screen-shot of your current AAC, print and laminate it! That way you have a familiar low-tech system.
5. **Ask familiar communication partners to go with you:** If possible, take someone who is familiar with your method of communication. These partners can help remind professionals to provide you with the time required to compose and share your message, or in certain cases can offer assistance, with your permission of course.
6. **Practice different methods of communication:** familiarize yourself with alternate modes of communicating. For instance some people use partner-assisted scanning or eye gaze, if they are unable to physically access their device. If you need more information about your options - talk to your SLP!

People Who Use AAC (PWUAAC)



Breaking the ICE Conferences (Ontario, Alberta, WEST)

What does ICE stand for? *Independence, Community, Empowerment.* This is a consumer-centered conference aimed at helping people who use AAC systems to develop their lives to the best of their abilities

Who is ICE for? Youth and adults who use AAC, people who support those who use AAC, and professionals in the field of AAC are welcome to attend, observe, learn and network with the wide variety of people attending the conference.



Goals of Breaking the ICE:

- Provide a forum to discuss issues of importance to people who use AAC (PWUAAC)
- Promote awareness of AAC and the interests of PWUAAC
- Provide an opportunity for PWUAAC to network
- AAC Town hall, where PWUAAC share ideas, make connections and voice their opinions
- Topics and Questions are provided ahead of time so PWUAAC can prepare their personal responses, comments, or questions

These annual conferences are hosted by :

And sponsored in part by:



TED^x - SFU: Listen, Acknowledge, Include | Glenda Watson-Hyatt



Glenda is a keynote speaker, a web accessibility consultant, a social media coordinator and published author. She also happens to use a communication device. While, I don't have the honour of saying I personally know Glenda, I can say that we are both involved with ISAAC Canada, and I look forward to the day that we formally meet.

I had the pleasure of watching Glenda's TEDx talk titled: Listen, Acknowledge, Include. Would you rather be able to walk or to talk? - A look into the ongoing fight to standardize accessibility and inclusion for people with all types of disabilities. Glenda describes how living with Cerebral palsy has shaped her life, entrepreneurial ventures, and activism on accessibility. Her goal is to debunk the negative perceptions and pre-conceived notions towards

those with disabilities and showcase strategies that can be used to increase inclusion. Through her various projects and committees, she aims to increase awareness, understanding and inclusion of people who use alternative means of communication. She played a strong advocacy role for the inclusion of communication access in the newly enacted Accessible Canada Act; the first-time speech and language disabilities have been recognized in accessibility legislation.



COVID Related information

Meet Lorraine Underwood. She decided something needed to be done to help those who have difficulty understanding when someone is wearing a mask. "When we wear a face mask it muffles the sound of our voice," Underwood explains of the project's inspiration, "and it also makes it really hard for people who rely on lip reading to understand what we're saying".



This light-up face mask powered by a Raspberry-Pi computer allows the user to wear a mask, with a microphone that translates speech into scrolling letters on the mask in real-time.



The core of the project is a Raspberry Pi, linked to a microphone and a battery for portable power. I'm not sure whether it became a functional tool, or even made it passed the first round of infection prevention and control! Regardless, kinda neat idea!

What's New in CDP

We want to thank Marlee Mayer for doing an amazing job of stepping in and filling Amy's shoes while she was on mat leave, we know it was no easy task! Early in October, Amy rejoined the Communication Devices Program and is providing OT services here once again. You can reach her at amcdougall5@deerlodge.mb.ca or at **204-831-3494** if you have any CDP OT related questions. As for Marlee, she hasn't gone too far! We were so pleased to hear that she would be taking the MND/ Day Hospital OT position here at Deer Lodge Centre. That means that we will continue to work closely with Marlee for clients with Motor Neuron Diseases such as Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS). You can reach her at mmayer@deerlodge.mb.ca or at **204-831-2465**

Unfortunately, the CDP Anniversary Celebration has been postponed. With all the uncertainty around COVID-19, we decided that we really couldn't do the celebration justice. So, stay tuned for the 15 year anniversary celebration!

For those of you anxiously awaiting the answer to our question in the Spring Newsletter: How many clients do you think have been referred to the CDP between 1 June 2009 and 1 June 2020? The answer is.....**1599!!** Wow! Keep those referrals pouring in! Thank-you to the whole community of clinicians out there that keep us going. We appreciate you more than you know!

