

CDP Update

Features • Resources • Tips • Clinical Practice

Spring 2022

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Feature

Calling all Clients! We want to hear from you!

We would like to see our newsletter become a tool that helps pass along important information about what's happening in the field of AAC (Augmentative and Alternative Communication), as well as a place to share what AAC means to our stakeholders.

That's where you come in! We want to hear from our clients, caregivers, support workers, clinicians and more! We would like to use the first page of this newsletter to highlight you!

While we encourage anyone to submit their story in their own words, we know that sometimes that can be a bit daunting. So, we would like to provide some sample questions that get you thinking about what you might like to submit.



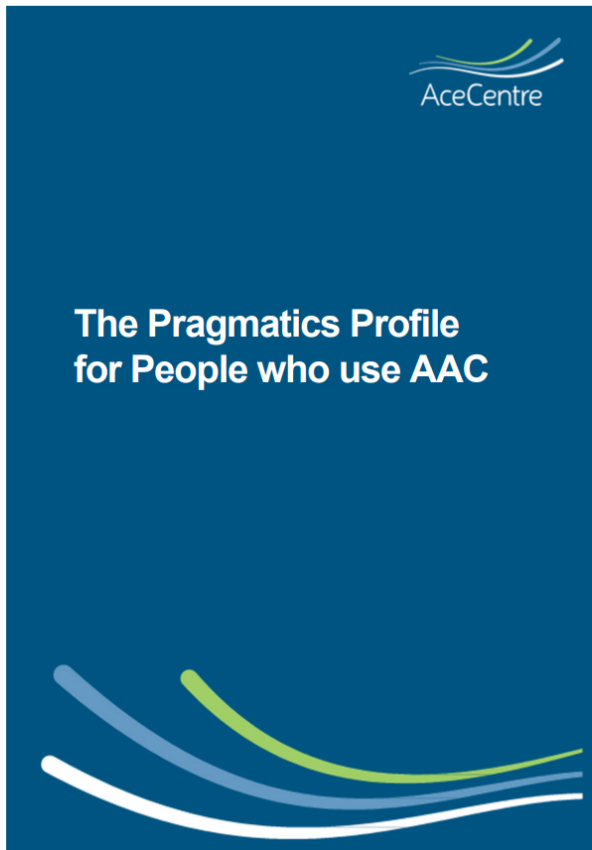
Sample Questions:

1. Who are you? How would you describe yourself to a new acquaintance?
2. Do you use AAC? If so, what kind of AAC do you use?
3. Do you use other methods of communication?
4. What does it mean to you to have access to AAC?
5. How do you use AAC within your life?
6. Does AAC make communication easier? Harder? No different?
7. Has having AAC opened opportunities to you that you may not have previously had?
8. Do you feel connected to a community of people who use AAC?
9. If you could change anything about AAC, what would it be?
10. What's your message to people who are communicating with you?

Prior to sharing any information, we would review, with you, everything we intend to share and we would also ask that you sign a consent form. So, contacting us or sending a submission does not mean it will automatically be shared! We will connect with you and have discussions first.

Please reach out to CDP@WRHA.MB.CA if you would like to be featured in the newsletter.

The Pragmatics Profile for People who use AAC



The original Pragmatics Profile of Everyday Communication Skills in Children was written by Hazel Dewart and Susie Summers, and adapted by Suzanne Martin, Kathrine Small and Rachel Stevens. The revised version has been created with permission of NFER - Nelson.

The aim was to create a resource that was easy to administer, that would allow clinicians to collect information about a person's reasons to communicate and their ability to participate in interactions. They wanted to produce a resource that would allow clinicians to successfully describe a person's functional communication skills rather than focusing on a linguistic model of description such as 'client is at a 3 word level'. This would allow clinicians to better define which skills need developing and in turn contribute to better quality targets for individuals using AAC.

The Profile includes four sections: Establishing context and motivation, Reasons to communication and reactions to communication, Contextual variation, and Participation in conversation.

The Profile does not have to be completed in one session and not all questions will be relevant to every client. Interviewer should use their discretion and either omit or change the order of questions as required.

It is suggested that the Profile should be used with individuals who have used AAC in the past, are currently using AAC, or where you feel that an individual is using informal methods of AAC and you wish to introduce formal methods. The Pragmatics Profile for People who use AAC is not designed to be a general communication or pragmatic assessment.

The resource is **FREE** to download. There are 2 options available.

1. Print & Fill - this allows you to download and print a paper copy and fill it in by hand.
2. Auto Entry - this allows you to fill the document in electronically in Microsoft Word.

The Pragmatics Profile for People who use AAC

Choose option:

Auto Entry Print & Fill

[Free download](#)

Appendix 1: Methods of communication chart

*FO = Understood by familiar only
All = Understood by all

		Uses AAC resource: single words	Uses AAC resource: sentence or phrase	Eye pointing, eye contact		Body movement		Vocalisation, sound, word or word approximation		Sign		Gesture		Facial expression		Other
				FO*	ALL	FO	ALL	FO	ALL	FO	ALL	FO	ALL			
1	Context and motivation															
1.1	Shows likes															
1.2	Shows dislikes															
2	Gaining attention															
2.1	Interest in interaction															
2.4	Gaining attention to prepare for an interaction															
3	Drawing attention															
3.1	... to self															
3.2	... to an event or action															
3.3	... to an object															
3.4	... to other people															
4	Requesting															
4.1	... a person															
4.2	... recurrence															
4.3	... cessation															
4.4	... assistance															
4.5	... an object															
4.6	Response to direct request for action															
4.7	... an event or action															
4.8	... information															
4.9	Responding to a request for information															
4.10	... confirmation of information															

* Martin, S., Small, K., and Stevens, R. 2017. The Pragmatics Profile for People who use AAC (First Published 26 Sep 2017). Available at: <https://acecentre.org.uk/resources/pragmatics-profile-people-use-aac/>.

International Society for Augmentative and Alternative Communication (ISAAC)

An Introduction to ISAAC

ISAAC – or the [International Society for Augmentative and Alternative Communication](https://isaac-online.org/english/about-isaac/) – is a membership organization working to improve the lives of children and adults with complex communication needs.

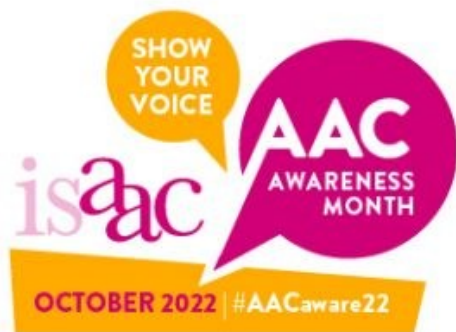
ISAAC's goal is to create worldwide awareness about how AAC can support individuals without speech. ISAAC accomplishes this by sharing information and promoting innovative approaches to research, technology and literacy through AAC. Activities include hosting the ISAAC biennial conference, sponsoring projects, and offering awards and scholarships.

- ISAAC was formed in 1983.
- ISAAC has Chapters in 16 countries or regions around the world.
- ISAAC members include people who use AAC, their families, therapists, teachers, students, doctors, researchers, organizations and companies that make communication aids.
- The ISAAC International office is located in Toronto, Canada.

ISAAC's Vision is that AAC will be recognized, valued and used throughout the world.

ISAAC's Mission is to promote the best possible communication for people with complex communication needs.

Every year, the ISAAC LEAD Committee plans a theme, events, and public relations material to support AAC Awareness month. This year, they are looking for feedback from you!! This year's theme is **"Show Your Voice"**



Having a voice and showing it can mean different things to different people. One way to show a voice is literally, by displaying the technology and methods used to speak. Another way to show a voice is by displaying technology and methods to advocate for people, causes, and change in the world.

They're planning a single day event with on-line panel discussions in October as well as activities and challenges over the next few months to help you "Show Your Voice."

They want to hear from you - so show your voice!

Take their [survey](#) where you can rank your preferences and share your ideas about the topics. The deadline for submission is May 19, 2022.

*above information taken directly from ISAAC website: <https://isaac-online.org/english/about-isaac/>

ISAAC Canada Update - Working Groups!

[ISAAC Canada](#) has set their sites on creating a few working groups to tackle the following areas:

1. Review and amend (as appropriate) the Terms of Reference for ISAAC Canada
2. Develop and Implement a Social Media committee
3. Develop and Implement an Advocacy Committee - Raising the Voice of AAC
4. Figure out the future of the Breaking the ICE Conferences

For more information or to get involved in any of the above working committees, please contact: Kathy Howery khowery@ualberta.ca



Accessibility and Legislation

CALL for CONSULTATIONS!

Share your thoughts with the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA)

This consultation will **open on April 21, 2022, and will close to input on May 31, 2022.**

The Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) wants to hear from persons with disabilities and their caregivers about their experiences with the Agency – focusing on the accessibility of the Agency’s services, any accessibility barriers that they have experienced, and ways that these barriers could be addressed. The insights gathered from these consultations will be used to shape the CRA’s first Accessibility Plan, which will set out the CRA’s approach to addressing and preventing accessibility barriers.

Who is the focus of this consultation?

The CRA will engage with persons with disabilities (and their caregivers) living in Canada who have interacted with the Agency; these interactions could include:

- Filing personal or business taxes;
- Applying for programs or benefits;
- Using the Agency’s websites, online or paper forms, or other tools, and;
- Contacting the Agency through any of its service channels (for example, call centres or in-person outreach).

***Note:** Interactions related to applying for jobs at the CRA will not be a part of the virtual consultations; however, any feedback about these interactions will be shared with the appropriate CRA teams.

Key questions for discussion

On July 11th, 2019, the [Accessible Canada Act](#) was enacted – formalizing the Government of Canada’s commitment to proactively identify, remove, and prevent barriers to accessibility wherever individuals interact with federal programs and services. This means going beyond just meeting accessibility standards and regulations; it means ensuring that accessibility is fully incorporated throughout the design and delivery of its programs and services. With this in mind, the CRA is seeking your ideas and input on two topics:

- Identifying any accessibility barriers to CRA programs and services for persons with disabilities, including the impact that these barriers have on clients’ experiences.
- Capturing ideas and recommendations from persons with disabilities on solutions that could address accessibility barriers that clients face when interacting with CRA programs and services.

Join In: How to Participate

- [Sign up for a virtual consultation session](#)
- [Complete an online survey](#)
- [Sign up for a virtual interview](#)
- **Share your thoughts by phone** Call 1 (866) 217-7176

Note: When registering for a virtual session or a virtual interview, please indicate if you need any accommodations to participate and provide any important details that can ensure that the right accommodations are secured for you.

**above information taken directly from: <https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/campaigns/share-your-thoughts-accessibility-and-the-canada-revenue-agency.html>*

Education & Resources

Communication Access to Justice (CAJust)

[Communication Access to Justice](#) (CAJust) is a national non-profit organization that promotes access to the justice system – including police, corrections, and courts - for people who have speech, language and/or cognitive disabilities.

CAJust trains and supports [Communication Intermediaries](#)® (CIs) who act as neutral communication mediators for victims, witnesses, and accused persons.

The organization further educates on the urgent need for the use of CIs to provide equitable access to justice in Canada.

CAJust has taken on this mandate from [Communication Disabilities Access Canada](#) (CDAC), focusing all its efforts on advancing decades of work in this area by CDAC.

CAJust Executive Director; Caitlin Buchel, RSLP, M.CI.Sc., (SLP)

Caitlin Buchel is a Speech-Language Pathologist (SLP) and a CI in Manitoba. She works with people who have diverse communication disabilities including those with neuro-degenerative disease, and those recovering from stroke or traumatic brain injury. In 2019/20, Caitlin was the manager of CDAC's CI program. She has supported people communicating in court, with the RCMP, Legal Aid, Public Interest Law Centre, the Manitoba Prosecution Service, and Restorative Justice.

You can contact Caitlin at: caitlinbuchel@cajust.ca



What's New in CDP

CDP is rocking and rolling over here! We've barely noticed that Manitoba decided not to participate in Spring this year. We've had referrals, follow ups, students, and major projects keeping us on our toes for the last few months.

You may have noticed that the CDP has been attempting to work through our immense list of follow ups. We have been striving to connect with all clients that have been renting equipment through our program for greater than one year. Our goal is to connect at least once a year to check in, see how the equipment is working, whether it's meeting your needs, and whether there is anything that we need to do to increase your success with the equipment.

So, to give you a little look into how it's been going... we have successfully connected with 231 clients over the last year. Of those clients, 95 or just over 41%, required some form of follow up from staff at the CDP! That has made us BUSY!!!

I thought this would be a good time to provide an updated picture of the team (Dimitri, Amy, Meline, Mark, & Aynsley). They're always working hard behind the scenes for all our clients and stakeholders.

If you are struggling with your equipment, please contact the Communication Devices Program at 204-831-3430.

