

CDP Update

Feature Devices · Tech Tips · Clinical Practice

Winter 2017

Device Spotlight
Access Spotlight
Clinicians Corner
Education/Resources
Odds & Ends
What's New in CDP

Communication Device Spotlight

TalkingBrix™

[TalkingBrix](#) are thin, lightweight communicators with built-in magnets that are perfect for carrying in a pocket or placing around the room! Use one Brix for single messages, or attach as many as you like to create simple, scalable communication grids. TalkingBrix use an ingenious tab and slot connector to link Brix together!



Create multi-message communicators in any arrangement you like. Straight-line layouts reinforce sequential communication or linear learning activities. L-shape and other layouts allow users to create communication grids that meet their unique physical needs.



Technical Specifications for each TalkingBrix:

- Messages: 1
- Levels: 0
- Recording Time: 10 seconds
- Switch Input: No
- ECU/Toy/Appliance Output: No
- Activation Surface Size: 1.8 inches or 4.6-cm
- Activation Force: 2 oz. or 57 grams
- Weight with Battery: 1.5 oz. or 43 grams
- Battery Type: Rechargeable ([see tip sheet](#))
- Mounting Connection: Internal Magnet
- Accessories Available: No

TalkingBrix are also simple to use and record messages on. Check out Ablenet's [video](#) for more information. You can also grab a copy of the manual [here](#).



Consider TalkingBrix for clients who:

- Require single or basic sequenced messages
- Are emergent communicators that do not require more complex systems
- Have the ability to directly access the TalkingBrix (no switch input available)

Access and Selection Method Spotlight

Switch Interface Options

You might find yourself wondering how we get switches to work with devices that do not have switch ports built in, like the dedicated SGDs have. Now that commercially available devices are commonly used as communication devices, we need a way to use switches with these systems (i.e. iOS, Windows or Android). Below are a few examples of how we accomplish this:



The [Smartbox Joycable](#) lets you attach one or two switches to your communication device. Simple USB 2.0 connection and quick setup make the Joycable an easy way to get started with switches, or expand an existing communication setup.



The [Tapio](#): Provides a wired connection to iDevice products. The beauty of a robust direct connection is there are no wireless worries with Bluetooth pairing, drop-outs, and sluggish connections. Forget about charging batteries too, Tapio sips power directly from the iPad.



The [Blue2](#): The NEW Blue2 Bluetooth switch provides single or dual switch access to iOS, OS X, Windows, and Android devices! Blue2 connects to your favorite device via a Bluetooth connection that is easy and quick to set up. New features include an improved switch activation surface that takes 40-percent less pressure to activate, multiple modes of operation for compatibility with all apps, and a long-lasting rechargeable battery.

The [Tecla](#) is another all encompassing interface. It works with iOS, Windows and Android devices. The tecla also pairs wirelessly via Bluetooth and has an 18 meter connectivity range. The exciting difference with the tecla, is that you can use up to 6 switches or the wheelchair drive controls to access your device.



We hope the [Tecla-e](#) will be available soon, check it out [here](#)! Some of the new and exciting features include: OSX (Mac computer) and Apple TV control! AND you can pair up to 8 different Bluetooth devices. Currently, the Tecla-e is on backorder. CDP hopes to have some in stock in 2018!



Consider a switch interface for those clients that:

- Are using a commercially available tablet and require switch access
- Want to be able to control their communication device through Multiple switches or drive controls
- Specifically require either direct or wireless switch connections

Clinician's Corner

Communication Disabilities Access Canada (CDAC)

In our Fall 2016 CDP Update Newsletter, we included a survey request from CDAC. They were interested in hearing from people with speech and language disabilities, family members, clinicians, service providers, SLP students, educators, disability advocates and anyone who wanted to see improved communication access services for people with speech and language disabilities.



Accessibility includes
communication

It's very exciting to say that the report is in! CDAC has compiled all the information from many stakeholders across our country, 2,205 people to be exact! 1.4% were from Manitoba, that's approximately 30 of us.

The CDAC has done a wonderful job pulling together the information that they gathered into a comprehensive 39 page document. The Key findings included:

- People with Speech, Language & Communication Disabilities (SLCDs) represent a distinct disability cohort that has unique accessibility requirements.
- Communication Access refers to ways that federal service providers can facilitate communication so that everyone, including people with SLCDs can communicate effectively when using their services.
- Effective Communication is a two-way process that involves being able to convey intended messages to another person and understanding what a person is communicating.
- People with SLCDs experience significant communication barriers when accessing government services in face-to-face interactions, telephone services, public consultations, and when accessing information and communications.
- Most of the barriers experienced by people with SLCDs can be addressed through inclusive accessibility legislation and education of federal service providers.
- Federal services where communication is critical such as healthcare, justice, emergency and education require communication access policies and practices to ensure that people with SLCDs can effectively, accurately and authentically communicate within these contexts.

While the project focused on identifying and reducing communication access barriers to federal government services, **96%** of surveyed participants, highlighted the need for increased provincial speech-language pathology, audiology, augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) services and funding for communication devices. Participants stressed that many people with SLCDs cannot begin to use federal services unless they have the means and skills to communicate.

Please follow to link below to read the entire CDAC report, released in January 2018, entitled; **Public Consultation on Federal Accessibility Legislation. Input from Canadians who have Speech, Language, & Communication Disabilities**

http://www.cdacanada.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Community_Consultation_for_Federal_Accessibility_Legislation_.pdf

For further information or to contact the CDAC:

[CDAC Newsletter Feb 2018](#)

131 Barber Greene Road
Toronto, Ontario M3C 3Y5
Tel. 416-444-9532

www.cdacanada.com
admin@cdacanada.com

ISAAC Canada

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

ISAAC Canada's Vision: that Augmentative and Alternative Communication will be recognized, valued, and used throughout the world.

[Brochure](#) for more information about what ISAAC Canada can do for you.



CDP Update Winter 2017

www.wrha.mb.ca/prog/cdp Tel. 204-831-3430

Education and Resources - Pathways



In the Fall 2017 CDP Update, we introduced you to the Tobii DynaVox Indi and the new software called SNAP + Core First. Did you know there is companion software called **Pathways**? It is an EXCELLENT resource for those of you implementing the Core First software with communicators!

Pathways is a free resource that is designed to be a basic 'how-to' guide to give the facilitator simple steps to get started. It's also a great clinical support; it provides guidance to successfully teach device use across a range of situations using any of the communication tools that are a part of 'Core First'.

It also provides a leveled structure for **implementing goals** across four key areas of skill development: **operational, strategic, social and linguistic**. We know those four areas are



Examples of Materials from a Lesson



Lesson Plan



Letter to Partners



Matching Cards



Book

important for anyone learning to use an AAC system in order to manage and grow within that system. Pathways for 'Snap + Core First' provides lessons for each of these areas, as well as helping you to track progress. It also contains lessons and books to help explicitly teach core words.

It provides video supported 'how to guides' so that even individuals who are intimidated by AAC, or have less experience with AAC can feel confident in teaching and implemented 'Core First'. It shows you how things are done, rather than trying to read a guide or follow a manual. Based on best practices from researchers and experts in the field, Pathways is a step-by-step guide, written in plain language, complete with real-world videos that show you how to successfully use your software to have the biggest impact on your client's communication.



Engaging, simple to follow path for getting started

With an intuitive dashboard and Getting Started walkthrough videos, you can instantly get underway with examples supported by scripts and videos, all while encouraging communication and interaction.

Expert lesson plans and tips with real-world video examples

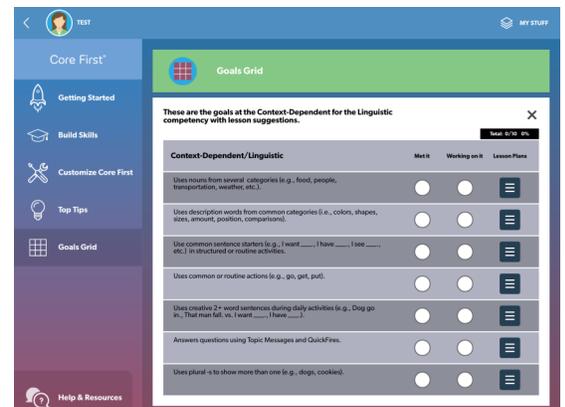
Pathways for Core First shows you how to implement Snap + Core First with real-world video examples for each lesson plan and materials.

Empowerment for communication partners

Communication is a two-way street, and being a good partner is even more important when your user's skills are developing. Pathways will teach you skills that are proven to facilitate engagement, communication, and language growth.

Quickly identify goals, then track and share progress

Use the interactive Goals Grid to determine the goals for users of all ability levels. Easily monitor and share progress, while advancing momentum moving forward with lesson plans to address every goal.



Odds and Ends - SGDs and Home Automation

Speech Generating Devices and Home Automation - is the future here?

In 1975, the first general purpose home automation network technology, [X10](#), was developed. It is a communication protocol for electronic devices. It primarily uses electric power transmission wiring for signaling and control and remains widely available today. By 1978, X10 products also included a 16 channel command console, a lamp module, and an appliance module. Soon after came the wall switch module and the first X10 timer. Some of you may recall using, or are still use the X10 modules! They were a game changer allowing many of our client to be able to have control over their environments.



With home automation, we can get really excited for our clients right now! The Amazon Echo is finally available in Canada, and we have had access to [Google Home](#) for a while now. What's great about either of these tools is that they respond to voice commands! You may be thinking, wait our client's often have limited verbal speech or are sometimes unintelligible. Don't worry, that's where the Speech Generating Device and Echo or Google Home can perform their magic! The above video features the Amazon Alexa, but Google Home essentially works the same way. (Video credit to [Boston Children's Hospital ALS Augmentative Communication Program](#)).

Aside from the traditional Electronic Aids for Daily Living (EADL) features such as: controlling music, lights, etc., Google home has some really neat [commands](#). Check out a few of my favourites below:

Alarm: Set, check, cancel, stop, and snooze multiple and/or recurring alarms

Facts & Info: Get answers to your everyday questions (i.e. "How far away is the moon"?)

Hands-Free Calling: Place calls to family, friends and local businesses in Canada and the U.S.

Thermostat control: Control the temperature with supported smart thermostats (i.e. [Nest](#), [EcoBee](#))

Weather: Ask for current weather or forecasts for the week for your home location or any other location

Delight: Have a little fun with these questions (i.e. "Make me laugh")

Calendar: Ask about an event or get your schedule for the day from Google Calendar

Easter Eggs: Discover hidden surprises (i.e. "How old are you"?)



*****PLEASE NOTE*****: **Google Home and the Amazon Echo are not provided by the Communication Devices Program - this information has been provided for your own personal interest and knowledge.**



Clinician Satisfaction Survey

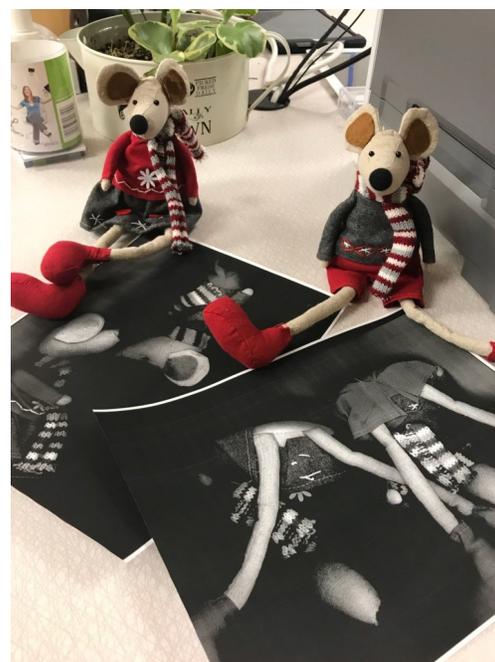
First of all, I would like to say a big ***Thank-you!!*** to all of you who were able to take time and complete our Clinician Satisfaction Survey. We were glad to see that the majority of you continue to be happy with the services we are able to offer. Having said that, we truly appreciated the constructive feedback you provided about our services. In the near future, we hope to offer clarification around the services we are able to provide, as well as improve our services as per your suggestions in the areas we are able to change!

On average **92.6%** of you scored the CDP as 4/5 or higher when asked: "Overall, how satisfied are you with CDP's services".

Some of the areas that you suggested we could improve (scored 80% or lower) included, our timeliness in responding to; equipment requests and training/education requests. We have already taken proactive steps to make our intake process more timely and equitable. We hope that you start to see those improvements as early as the New Year. Another area that you would like to see more resources dedicated to included training and education for clinicians. We would love to see this happen as well. Please let us know if there are specific areas of education you are looking for and whether you are looking for large or small group, or one-on-one sessions! We would love to hear from you and would be happy to work towards developing more education opportunities!

What's New in CDP - Invaded by 'Chrismouses'!

Many of you have probably heard of Elf on the Shelf, but have you heard of a Chrismouse in the house? No, well let me introduce you to Wendy & Peter, the CDP Chrismouses. They showed up during a staff meeting one day and promptly decided to start eating some of our snacks. Since then, they have gotten themselves into a fair bit of trouble over the holiday season. We found them swinging from the ceiling, digging through the garbage, & they even started a snowball fight! Needless to say, that photocopier stunt was also a little naughty. Overall, these little guys are probably on the nice list though. They helped Mel out at reception one day, they staged a photo shoot and they have really done their best to bring the Holiday spirit to CDP. We are a little late getting this newsletter out, but....



*From all of us at CDP, to all of you,
Happy Belated
Holidays!!*