

December 2012



Jeffrey K. Riley,
ISAAC President

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Message from the President

Dear ISAAC Members:

It is the middle of November as I write to you, and still streaming in are many accounts of the very exciting and inspiring events that marked International AAC Awareness Month (October 2012) across the world. Events were as varied as the people and places where people who use AAC (PWUAAC) and their friends and families find themselves: events in public spaces, proclamations, newspaper and media interviews with PWUAAC, walks, fundraising events, symposiums, virtual events, and so much more.

What impresses me most about AAC Awareness events are the reactions of people who are unfamiliar with AAC. I hear people say "Wow! I never realized that he/she had so much going on in their heads and so much to say!" The unspoken meaning in these statements is recognition that the person who uses AAC is not just someone with a disability, "dumb" or mute; he or she is a real person, with depth, complexity, and a unique personality. AAC Awareness activities highlight the humanity in all of us and reinforce our bonds as human beings, broadening our view of the world and the human condition, and bringing us closer, enhancing our respect and appreciation for one another.

I would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank the many thousands of people across the globe who gave of their time, inspiration, and energy to strengthen our human bonds by heightening the awareness and appreciation of people who use AAC. ISAAC remains committed to furthering and expanding this awareness through a multitude of activities and initiatives. Amongst the many initiatives that ISAAC undertakes, none are more important than individuals who use AAC having the opportunity to express themselves and on their own terms build the human bonds that result in mutual respect and understanding by all.

May you all enjoy the various celebrations that mark the end of our calendar year across the world, sharing your thoughts, ideas, kindness, respect and humanity with your families, friends, and communities.

The best to you all,

Jeff Riley

ISAAC President 2012-2014

[Click here to see this article](#)
in translation

... From the Executive Director

Welcome to the December 2012 edition of E-News. The ISAAC International office is excited to report on some of the many initiatives currently underway.

Planning is currently underway for ISAAC 2014. We are expecting to select and hire a conference organizing company very soon, after releasing a Request for Proposal document to a carefully selected group of "short-listed" companies. We also expect, very early in 2013, to announce the dates and location in Lisbon for Conference 2014. We will notify all ISAAC members by email once these decisions are finalized.

ISAAC 2014 in Lisbon will be unique in that it will be the first time a biennial conference will be managed directly out of the ISAAC International office in Toronto. As Executive Director, I am very much looking forward to taking a "hands-on" approach in ensuring that our next conference is bigger and better than any of our previously very successful conferences. Working closely with our Conference Co-Chairs, Luis Azevedo, Isabel Amaral, Pedro Encarnação, and Maria Margarida Ramalho Talone Nunes da Ponte has already begun and, along with our new President Jeff Riley, we all look forward to making Conference 2014 in "Lisboa" a huge success!

ISAAC International is now planning the first of our webinars for 2013.

Coming off a very successful webinar collaboration with AAIDD, the American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, our very own Manager of Communications, Heather Stonehouse, is laying the groundwork for presenting our members with webinar content that is both timely and interesting. Keep checking your email and the ISAAC website for upcoming details and, if you have any topics that you would like to see covered, by all means get in touch directly with either myself or Heather by email.

We are in the final stages of testing our new e-commerce functionality on the ISAAC International website. The first phase of this new functionality will be making available direct online 2013 membership sign-up and renewal for ISAAC International members. We expect this new functionality to be "up and running" in the next few weeks, and will notify all ISAAC International members by email when it is available for use. For those whose ISAAC membership is through a national/regional Chapter, please contact your Chapter directly for more information.

As always, I welcome your thoughts and feedback. Please do

Continued on page 3...



Franklin Smith, ISAAC
Executive Director

isaac

... From the Executive Director (continued from page 2)

*“As always,
I welcome your
thoughts and
feedback.”*

not hesitate to contact me directly,
at franklin@isaac-online.org, should
you require any further information
or assistance.

Regards and thanks,
Franklin Smith
Executive Director

*[Click here to see this
article in translation](#)*

ISAAC/AAIDD Webinar Resources –

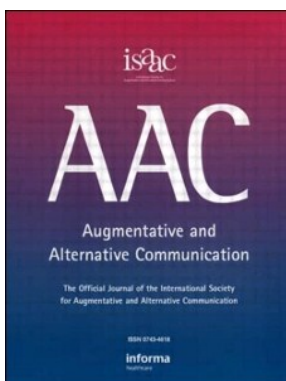
Augmentative Communication Apps: Making the Best Choice for the Best AAC Voice

Presenters: Carrie Leonhart and Debby McBride

The process of identifying the optimum AAC app(s) for an individual with complex communication needs begins by determining whether the individual would be best served by this type of tool as opposed to other strategies. If so, the next step is to understand the basic features that match the individual's skills and needs. This webinar provided information to assist in navigating these new options for, where appropriate, the most functional AAC solution using mobile technology (e.g., iPod Touch, iPad). Comments from webinar registrants were positive, including: “Well presented, easy to follow, very, very good.” “Thank you for a great webinar!! This was the most clear, concise, and informative (not to mention technical glitch-free) presentation I have seen. Bravo to all!”

To hear the November 28th webinar presentation and Q & A , follow the [Archived Recording](#) link on AAIDD's website. [Click here](#) for resource materials linked to ISAAC's website.

For more on this hot topic: A recent US television news broadcast of the program *60 Minutes* included a segment titled, [“Apps for Autism: Communicating on the iPad.”](#)



Coming soon...

The December 2012 edition of the AAC journal. This article has been released early online:

Communication Access to Businesses and Organizations for People with Complex Communication Needs, by Barbara Collier, Sarah W. Blackstone, and Andrew Taylor.

For more information and to read a summary, [click here](#).



International AAC Awareness Month

International AAC Awareness Month is celebrated around the world each October. The goal is to raise awareness of Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) and to inform the public about the many different ways in which people communicate using AAC. This article was submitted by Eija Roisko, ISAAC Suomi Finland.

In Finland, Communication and Technology Centre Tikoteekki organized a much bigger program of events than a year ago. ISAAC Suomi Finland and other disability associations, Communication Centres in Central Hospitals, primary and vocational schools and public libraries all over Finland were involved in our AAC Awareness Week, October 1 - 10, 2012.



Shopping centre awareness events were a great success



Media coverage helped spread the word

In total, 30 public events were held during that week. The theme was, "How can you speak without speech?" The week was launched with a public lecture in Parliament by a mother of two children who use AAC. She has also lost her ability to speak due to inflammation.

During AAC Awareness Week, open houses were held in several Communication Centres located in central hospitals. People could get information about AAC and how to get reimbursed for a communication assessment. They could also see and try communication devices and discuss options with therapists and IT advisers.

In addition, Tikoteekki organized two big public events in shopping centres (Helsinki and Turku), together with other associations, in order to



International AAC Awareness Month Report ...continued

promote AAC and the rights of people who use AAC. Many lectures and workshops were also held and 11 public libraries all over Finland highlighted AAC literature and DVDs.

Ruskis, a school for children with physical disabilities, invited other students from “normal” schools to get to know AAC. Students, therapists and teachers made a “communication path” that was supervised by pupils who use AAC. Guests could try quizzes, broken phone games, and “Ask Me” – a game where guests could ask a girl who uses AAC questions using auditory scanning. Other activities included the chance to control a computer using an eye-gaze interface. The purpose was to give the public an idea of how people who cannot speak interact with their devices on a daily basis.



Public libraries displayed AAC literature and DVDs

Our AAC Awareness Week was a success. Tens of articles were published in daily magazines and journals, four interviews were broadcast on main radio channels, and one on a major television channel. As a result, thousands of people all over Finland heard something about AAC.



Eye-gaze technology was demonstrated



AAC Week Marketplace

Photos courtesy of Eija Roisko



International AAC Awareness Month 2012 Report...continued

This year, the **4th Annual 24-Hour Global AAC Chat** (also called Read-a-Thon), a major event marking International AAC Awareness Month, was held on October 17th, 2012. The purpose of the AAC Chat is to get as many people as possible around the world talking and sharing about AAC and the power of communication, and figuring out ways to bring effective communication to all who need it.

People from all over the world participated, from the UK, France and Malta, to the US, Canada, Chile, Australia, Indonesia, Japan and Sri Lanka. A variety of media – Skype, Facebook and Twitter – came into play during the 24-hour period. The chat was held this year in French as well as English, with leadership from ISAAC- Francophone members Isabelle Guillot and Mary Ann Glicksman.

According to Judy Bailey, coordinator of the event, “Everyone who participated in some way made this event a successful 24+ hours of connecting, sharing, learning, mentoring, and advocating.” Thanks

to Judy for all the work she does to make this event a big success.

“De kracht van communicatie,” The Power of Communication Symposium, October 11-12, 2012, in Kerkrade, The Netherlands

ISAAC Netherlands/Flanders held this Awareness Month event to inform the public about the different ways people communicate. [Click here](#) for more information and presentations (in Dutch).

Sharing a story can show the world what is possible with an effective communication method of one’s choice!

Stories, poems, essays, photos, slideshows, video clips, and movies by people who use AAC are in the process of being compiled for the *High Performance Communication – Best Life Experience 2012 Online Collection*. Visit the website, [AAC Awareness](#) for more information.

For more reports, visit [International AAC Awareness Month on Facebook](#).



Special thanks...ISAAC would like to acknowledge the professionals who bring you messages in translation from our President and Executive Director in each E-News issue: Ghislaine Picot (French); Elena Panigadi (Italian) and Gabriella Veruggio (this issue); Cordula Birngruber (German); and Ana Saavedra (Spanish). [Click here](#) to find links to their translations on the ISAAC website.



Supporting AAC in Novi Sad, Serbia

Part I, by Jelena Mazurkiewicz

I work as a special education teacher at Milan Petrović Primary and Secondary School in Novi Sad. I am the only member of ISAAC from Serbia. This is my story of how *connections matters* for the benefit of communication among children and the people I work with.

I spent two semesters at Penn State University in State College, Pennsylvania, six years ago as a Hubert H. Humphrey Fellow on a Fulbright Scholarship financed by the US State Department. I was grateful for and fascinated by the lectures of Dr. Janice Light and Dr. Kathryn Drager and learned about a whole new field in rehabilitation of children and others with speech disorders.

When I came back to Serbia I set up a project to spread the idea of importance of AAC interventions with light tech and high tech devices, including assistive technology. I tried to share ideas generously with the



The main square in Novi Sad

support of my principal Mrs. Slavica Markovic and the support of LIFEtool, Austria, throughout Serbia. Some of my colleagues recognized the value of these ideas immediately. Some, unfortunately, were very skeptical. I continued my mission, understanding that people are afraid of change. We created several materials that support communication and AAC to help teachers on an everyday basis in the classroom.

Several years later I was still not satisfied with the results, despite my efforts. Being a member of ISAAC for several years, I contacted the Executive Director, Franklin Smith, in March 2012. He put me in touch with Dorothy Fraser, the senior representative of Central Coast Children's Foundation and a member of ISAAC. Dorothy had already worked on several projects in Eastern Europe and could come to visit us.

It all happened very quickly after that. In fact, by the end of November 2012 we already had a plan in place!

Dorothy visited Novi Sad at the end of October to gain insight into what we were already doing and how she could help. Some events were planned and some happened unexpectedly. This was our schedule:

Saturday: Dorothy's arrival/ Conference on Cerebral Palsy.

Sunday: Roundtable on the closing day of the Conference.

[Click here](#) to read full article on the ISAAC website.



Supporting AAC in Novi Sad, Serbia

Part 2, by Dorothy Fraser

I was invited to the Milan Petrović Primary and Secondary School in Novi Sad, Serbia, for a one-week visit. The purpose was to discuss with staff ways to further develop AAC and AT, as described by Jelena Mazurkiewicz in her report (see p. 7).

It was a very interesting experience, with opportunities for me to observe classes and therapists working with individual pupils, to have discussions with staff and also to provide PowerPoint presentations, with Jelena translating throughout the week.

Mrs. Slavika Markovic, the school's principal, was on the organizing committee of the International Scientific Conference: Special Education and Rehabilitation-Cerebral Palsy, held in Novi Sad from 25th to 28th October 25 – 28, 2012. The theme was “Cerebral Palsy: A

Multidisciplinary and Multidimensional Approach.”

When Jelena collected me from Belgrade airport she took me to meet Mrs. Markovic. I arrived during the poster session on the third day of the conference. I was invited to join the round table meeting on the following day, when the scientific committee and organizing committee had a final discussion on outcomes and future plans.

They very kindly gave me an opportunity to explain about ISAAC, my membership in Communication Matters (ISAAC UK), and my role as Senior Representative to Eastern and Central Europe for the Central Coast Children's Foundation Inc.

I described some of the ways to provide support for emerging AAC nations through international collaboration and the international patient-provider communication projects. Dr. Bekic, one of the doctors on the scientific committee, invited me to give a short PowerPoint presentation at the medical school as an introduction to “patient-provider communication” for people from all medical disciplines.

The content emphasized preparing children for medical encounters, using examples and other elements from the pre-conference day in which I participated at ISAAC 2012 in Pittsburgh.

[Click here](#) to read full article on the ISAAC website.



School principal Mrs. Slavika Markovic spoke about the development of AAC in Serbia

United Nations Update



The United Nations Enable Newsletter, [available online](#), is published by the Secretariat for the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (DSPD/DESA), with input from UN offices, agencies, funds and programs, as well as from civil society organizations, including organizations of persons with disabilities. The November

2012 issue gives notice of a High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on Disability and Development (HLMD), on September 23, 2013, Under the theme, “The Way Forward: A Disability Inclusive Development Agenda towards 2015 and Beyond,” the HLMD will comprise a plenary meeting and two interactive round tables.

ISAAC’s Family Support Committee would like to hear from you!

“ISAAC exists because of families,” says Mary Ann Glicksman (ISAAC-Francophone), who co-chairs ISAAC’s Family Support Committee, along with Liz Moulam of Communication Matters (ISAAC-UK). Having surveyed people who use AAC and their families after ISAAC 2010 in Barcelona, they felt that while it is beneficial to attend conferences, they can sometimes be prohibitively expensive for people who use AAC, as costs for families and caregivers must be taken into account. They recommend that ISAAC focus on providing encouragement for families in addition to making information available at the biennial conference. A committee is being formed to gather information from families in order to support them in their role as primary communication partners and advocates for their children, and to actively encourage their participation as ISAAC members. ISAAC Chapters and other interested members are invited to forward material on families to [Liz Moulam](#) and [Mary Ann Glicksman](#).

Just for Fun...

The 12 Days of Tweets

From [Communication Matters](#) in the UK, brand new for this holiday season: “The 12 Days of Tweets!” Follow [@comm_matters](#) on Twitter for some thoughts on how to promote AAC.

Call Me Maybe...

[Click here](#) to view a parody video featuring the song “Call Me Maybe” by pop music sensation Carly Rae Jepsen. The song has been reinterpreted by graduates of the [Royal College Speech and Language Therapists](#) using AAC themes. With more than 8,000 views to date, it was created and posted on YouTube as a promotion for the [Giving Voice Campaign](#) in the UK.

News from Canada

Breaking the ICE Canada 2013 Conference

June 7, 8, 9 - 2013

University of Toronto Residence
89 Chestnut Street, Toronto,
Ontario, Canada



"ICE" stands for Independence, Community and Empowerment

This conference was created by and for individuals who use AAC and their families. New for 2013: "My AAC Inspiration" Poster Presentations will provide an opportunity to develop a poster highlighting a topic to share with Breaking the ICE participants. Please visit the conference [website](#) for updates. For a PDF version of the "Save the Date" poster, [click here](#).

Kilometres for Communication is partnering with **ISAAC Canada** to form a Canadian network that will connect people, organizations, resources and other networks in order to enhance people's communication with AAC. They are looking for volunteers in many areas, including researching and sharing online resources (related websites, blogs, Facebook pages, etc.) as well as information about services, supports, advocacy groups, etc. If you are interested, please send an email to [Kilometres for Communication](#).



Augmentative Communication Community Partnerships Canada (ACCPC) has been renamed **Communication Disabilities Access Canada (CDAC)**. CDAC is a national, non-profit charitable organization promoting accessibility and community inclusion for people who have communication disabilities, and who may or may not use AAC methods. For more information, visit their [website](#) and follow CDAC on [Facebook](#).

Did you know? Scientists are working on an AAC device that has the potential to use brain waves to facilitate communication for physicist Stephen Hawking. Due to his progressive neurological disorder, it is increasingly difficult for Hawking to communicate, leading scientists to explore how brain scanning can be applied to communication technology. [iBrain](#) may hold the key to enabling Hawking to communicate through his thoughts alone.

ISAAC has 15 Chapters and more than 3,000 members worldwide. For information about how you can participate in your country or region, contact the organizations listed below, or ISAAC International for areas not listed.



ISAAC Australia
(www.isaacaustralia.com)

ISAAC Brazil

ISAAC Canada
(www.isaac-canada.org)

ISAAC Denmark
(www.isaac.dk)

ISAAC Suomi Finland
(www.papunet.net/isaac)

ISAAC French-speaking countries and regions
(www.isaac-fr.org)

ISAAC German-speaking countries and regions
(www.isaac-online.de)

ISAAC India
(www.ayjnihh.nic.in)

ISAAC Israel
(www.isaac.org.il)

ISAAC Italy
(www.isaacitaly.it)

ISAAC Netherlands/Flanders
(www.isaac-nf.nl)

ISAAC Norway
(www.isaac.no)

ISAAC Sweden
(www.isaac-sverige.se)

ISAAC United Kingdom
(www.communicationmatters.org.uk)

USSAAC
(www.ussaac.org)

Season's Greetings
from all of us
at ISAAC !
With our very
best wishes for
"highest performance
communication
and
best life experience"
in 2013!



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ISAAC Chapters and members worldwide are invited to submit items of interest from your country or region. News, AAC practice tips, research, personal essays, in article format or as a link to online articles or resources, will be reviewed and made available on the ISAAC website as appropriate. Please send articles and photos to [Nola Millin](#).

ISAAC E-News is published four times each year. Comments on this issue are welcome. Please contact [Heather Stonehouse](#).



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.

ISAAC is a Non-Governmental Organization in consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

Contact Us

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