

Message from the ISAAC President

Yonit Hagoel-Karnieli

Dear ISAAC Family,

Over the past several months, our organization has seen exciting progress across many areas, and I am pleased to share with you the update on recent developments as well as what lies ahead in the coming months.

ISAAC-South Korea

We are delighted to extend a warm welcome to the members of ISAAC-South Korea as they join us with the opening of their new Chapter. This is a truly exciting moment for our global community, and we are honored to celebrate it together. I would like to express my heartfelt appreciation to everyone who contributed, supported, and worked tirelessly to make this milestone possible. Your dedication and collaboration have brought us to this wonderful achievement.

Read more about ISAAC-South Korea on [page 11](#).



Inside this issue

[From the Executive Director](#)

Page 4-5

[About ISAAC Events](#)

Page 6

[AAC Around the World](#)

Page 7-12

[News](#)

Page 13-16

[PWUAAC Chats](#)

Page 17

...continued on page 2

Message from the ISAAC President ...continued



ISAAC International Forum – Zagreb, October 2026



Preparations for the ISAAC International Forum in Zagreb, Croatia are advancing steadily. This two-day pre-conference, held in collaboration with [ATAAC](#), will take place October 19–20, just before the ATAAC Conference.

The preliminary program has been completed, with expanded tracks focusing on AAC for children, adults, and emerging assistive technologies.

Discussions with local partners in Zagreb are underway to broaden community engagement and enrich the conference experience.

Launch of the New ISAAC Forum Website

We have officially launched our new [ISAAC Forum website](#), and registration for this year's Forum is now open. This marks an important milestone in strengthening global engagement and creating new opportunities for collaboration within our community. The announcement has been widely shared by email and additional outreach through our social media channels.

ISAAC Virtual Conference – November 2026



We have also launched our new [ISAAC Virtual Conference website](#) and opened registration for this major event taking place in November. The Call for Papers for the 2026 Virtual Conference is now open, and we are already seeing strong interest from contributors around the world. These developments reflect the continued growth and enthusiasm surrounding our virtual programming.

...continued on page 3

Message from the ISAAC President ...continued



Nomination Committee

In recent months, the Nomination Committee has completed its selection of candidates for ISAAC Executive Board positions for the 2026–2028 term. This list will be submitted to the ISAAC Council for approval. Naturally, additional nominations may still be submitted prior to the final selection.

Organizational Initiatives and Ongoing Projects

In addition to our major events and committee's work, several broader initiatives have progressed:

- Continued development of a new ISAAC digital platform designed to support knowledge-sharing and collaboration among ISAAC chapters worldwide.

- Expansion of partnerships with regional AAC organizations.
- Advancement of an international project to collect data on AAC use in developed countries in Europe (a project with ESLA), and in developing countries, with the goal of advancing future policies and practices.

With gratitude,

[Yonit Hagoel-Karnieli](#)

ISAAC President

*Messages from ISAAC's
President and Executive
Director are available in French,
Italian, and Portuguese
translation on our [website](#).*



From the Executive Director

Franklin Smith

Welcome to the June 2026 edition of The ISAAC Communicator.

ISAAC Membership 2026

I am thrilled to announce another very positive membership year for all of ISAAC International. With approximately 1,600 members worldwide so far during 2026, ISAAC membership this year is so far nicely matching last year's amazing numbers!

We appreciate each and every member who has renewed their membership for 2026. If you have not yet renewed, please do so, as ISAAC members are eligible for significant discounts on subscriptions to our journal [AAC](#), as well as associated Chapter publications.

In addition, ISAAC members can access significant discounts to our 2026 events....

ISAAC Forum @ ATAAC 2026

As announced by our President, Yonit Hagoel-Karnieli, ISAAC International is thrilled to partner with ATAAC 2026, and present our first-ever ISAAC Forum two-day pre-conference workshops on October 19 and 20, 2026 in Zagreb, Croatia, in advance of the ATAAC 2026 conference.

The new ISAAC Forum initiative was developed in clear recognition of the desire by many in our global stakeholder community for in-person engagement at an ISAAC conference-style event.

[Registration tickets](#) are now available for purchase, at the Early Bird discounted rate, from our dedicated ISAAC Forum website. ISAAC is offering for sale tickets for either the ISAAC Forum only, as well as a **COMBINED** ticket for both the ISAAC Forum and ATAAC 2026, the latter in conjunction with our friends at [ATAAC](#).

In addition to purchasing tickets for these exciting in-person events, the [schedule of sessions](#) and [speakers](#) for the ISAAC Forum @ ATAAC 2026 is also available from our website.

We look forward to welcoming the world to Zagreb, Croatia this October.

...continued on page 5

From the Executive Director
...continued



ISAAC Virtual Conference 2026 — “AAC in Everyday Life: Today, Tomorrow, and Beyond”

Building upon the successes of the 2024 and 2025 virtual conferences, ISAAC is presenting its fully online Virtual Conference 2026 this year, taking place on November 10 and 11, 2026.

Our Call for Papers is currently open, and detailed information is available [here](#).

Submissions must be made through our [online submission portal](#).

[Registration tickets](#) are now available for purchase, at the Early Bird discounted rate, from our dedicated ISAAC Virtual Conference 2026 website.

2026 Special Meeting of the ISAAC Council

On May 6th, 2026, a Special Meeting of the ISAAC Council was called by Yonit Hagoel-Karnieli and Catia Walter, in their capacities as ISAAC President and Chair of the ISAAC Council respectively.

The official notification for this meeting can be found [here](#), on the ISAAC website.

The meeting has been scheduled for a start time of 11:00 am Toronto time, on Monday September 14th, 2026 (see the [world converted local times](#)).

One of the key agenda items for this meeting will be the confirmation of the 2026-28 ISAAC Executive Board (EB). The ISAAC Council has already been provided, by the ISAAC Nominations Committee and as approved by the Executive Board, a preliminary slate for the next ISAAC EB.

If any ISAAC member has any questions about the process for nominating and confirming the next ISAAC Executive Board, feel free to contact your country/regional Council member. The list of current Council members is available [from the ISAAC website](#). Members residing in countries not directly represented by a Council member are welcome to get in touch directly with the Chair or Chair-Elect of the ISAAC Council.

As always, I welcome your thoughts and feedback. Please do not hesitate to contact me directly, at franklin@isaac-online.org, should you require any further information or assistance.

Regards and thanks,
Franklin Smith

ISAAC Forum 2026



A New Way to Connect

The ISAAC International Forum is a new in-person opportunity to connect, learn, and advance the field of AAC.

The first ISAAC Forum will take place in Zagreb, Croatia, on October 19 - 20, 2026, in collaboration with ATAAC, and immediately preceding the ATAAC Conference. This two-day pre-conference will be developed, sponsored, and managed by ISAAC.

Join colleagues from around the world to exchange ideas, build connections, and be inspired by leading experts.

Sessions include:

- Comprehensive Literacy Instruction for Multi-Level Groups of Learners Using AAC with Karen Erickson and Lori Geist
- Building language and communication skills with children who need or use AAC with Janice Light
- Working Toward UNITY: Principles for Advancing Communication Access for Children with Disabilities with Kathryn Drager
- AI within AAC: A panel discussion exploring key pillars of AI in Augmentative and Alternative Communication with John Costello
- Starting with the Basics: A Universal Approach to Augmentative and Alternative Communication Intervention in Schools with Karen Erickson and Lori Geist

[Register now!](#)

ISAAC Virtual Conference 2026



Join us for ISAAC's Virtual Conference 2026 – “AAC in Everyday Life: Today, Tomorrow, and Beyond.”

The conference focuses on advancing the field of Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) by exploring cutting-edge research, technology advancements, and inclusive practices.

The event brings together persons who use AAC and their families, researchers, practitioners, engineers, vendors, and advocates to discuss communication access, self-determination, mental health, education, and global perspectives, fostering collaboration and driving meaningful change in the field of AAC.

Through short presentations, interactive sessions, panel discussions, and poster sessions participants will gain insights into cutting-edge research, technological innovations, and real-world applications that empower persons who use AAC worldwide.

[Submit your abstract. Deadline is July 10, 2026](#)
[Register for the Virtual Conference 2026!](#)

AAC Around the World



Editors Note:

"AAC Around the World" is a new, permanent section of the ISAAC Communicator, which now replaces the CSWN newsletter. ISAAC welcomes articles contributed for this section from around the world, that focus on AAC and assistive technology.

Reflections from the USSAAC SABER Committee: A Year in Review (2025)

Yoosun Chung, Ph.D., George Mason University, College of Education and Human Development

Michelle Gutmann, Ph.D., Purdue University, Department of Speech, Language, and Hearing Sciences

Introduction

The USSAAC Committee was established in November 2023 in response to growing recognition of the need to intentionally address equity, representation, and belonging within the AAC community. The committee was co-created by two AAC user leaders, USSAAC Past President Yoosun Chung and current USSAAC President Tracy Rackensperger, with a

commitment to ensuring that AAC users were not only represented but actively involved in shaping the committee's direction and priorities. From its inception, the committee was co-chaired by two AAC users, reflecting a belief that people who use AAC should have meaningful leadership roles in conversations that directly affect their lives. Given the rapid pace at which technology is influencing all aspects of life, from recreation to educational and professional practice, it is imperative that people who use AAC continue to occupy integral leadership roles in this organization.

The committee brought together AAC users, clinicians, researchers, educators, and advocates with diverse backgrounds and experiences. Early discussions focused on developing a shared mission and goals that reflected the values and priorities of the AAC community. Through a collaborative process, members created a mission statement centered on supporting AAC users and families who have been historically excluded from AAC technologies, services, and supports, with the goal of ensuring that their needs, perspectives, and aspirations are respected and represented.

...continued on page 8

AAC Around the World

... continued



Formation and Goals of the Committee

Recognizing the broad scope of issues facing the AAC community, the committee established subgroups to focus on specific areas of need. These smaller working groups allowed members to pursue targeted initiatives while maintaining alignment with the committee's overall mission. In addition to subgroup activities, committee efforts also focused on advocacy, education, research, and collaboration with other USSAAC initiatives, including support for the Telehealth Coverage Act (HR 2263), which aims to make permanent certain telehealth flexibilities under the Medicare program, as well as disaster preparedness and response efforts following the July 2025 floods in Texas.

Committee Initiatives and Activities

As the committee evolved, members also reflected on how to best communicate its mission and values in a changing world. These discussions ultimately led to the committee changing its name to the *Supporting All Becoming Empowered and Represented* (SABER) Committee. Although the name changed, the committee's commitment remained the same: to advance belonging, equity, representation, and meaningful participation for people who use AAC and their communities. The

committee's work has involved a variety of endeavors, among them research and advocacy. SABER Committee members have organized themselves into two subgroups - a Vendor subgroup and an AAC User subgroup. The Vendor subgroup focuses on identifying key personnel at AAC vendors in the United States so that communication with key personnel can be established to determine both the presence and scope of the involvement of people who use AAC in each respective company's research and development endeavors. This IRB-approved initiative involves critical information-gathering with a view to identification of those AAC product companies that involve people who use AAC at every step in the product development and enhancement pipelines, as well as those whose endeavors could benefit from more input from people who use AAC. The AAC User Subgroup was established to ensure that the perspectives of people who use AAC remain central to the committee's work. This subgroup provides a space for AAC users to share experiences, discuss issues affecting their daily lives, and identify priorities for future advocacy, education, and research. One of its initial projects involved the development of a series of infographics and videos highlighting the committee's mission, activities, and accomplishments for dissemination through USSAAC. ...continued on page 9

AAC Around the World ... continued



Reflections & Future Directions

The SABER Committee has continued to make strides in addressing critical issues in AAC research and advocacy. These efforts include ensuring that the voices of people who use AAC remain central to research and development, examining the effects of ableism in society, advocating for AAC users in rapidly evolving healthcare and political climates, and considering how emerging technologies such as AI will influence AAC. The committee also strives to ensure that each person who needs AAC continues to have meaningful choices regarding the communication system and voice they select, thereby rejecting a one-size-fits-most approach to AAC assessment and intervention (Senner et al., 2025). Given the heterogeneity of the population that uses or needs AAC, one type of speech-generating device (SGD) or a single app is unlikely to meet the communication needs of every individual.

Although progress has been made across initiatives, more work remains to meet our goals. For instance, continued advocacy for services and rights of AAC users is necessary and can be strengthened by working with other organizations whose mandate it is to support

these services and rights so that common goals enhance our shared impact. As a committee, we aim to advocate for more work to broaden medical providers' understanding and appreciation for the breadth and depth of how AAC can assist patients in medical settings, including both those who are temporarily or permanently unable to speak. Providing this type of education also requires continued growth in AAC coursework within pre-service university programs so that new clinicians are increasingly aware of AAC options and how best to serve their patients' needs. This work would be strengthened by continued growth of interprofessional education (IPE) and practice (IPP) so that rising clinicians have the benefit of seeing AAC teams in action, with teams composed of the interdisciplinary professionals who contribute to successful outcomes in AAC.

Throughout its work, the committee seeks to balance ambitious goals with the realities of volunteer participation. Members recognize the importance of prioritizing activities, managing workload, and developing sustainable approaches to advocacy and systems change. These ongoing reflections continue to shape the committee's work and future directions.

...continued on page 10

AAC Around the World

... continued



Broader Implications for the AAC Field

The experiences of the SABER Committee suggest several important considerations for the future of the AAC field. First, AAC users should be included as co-leaders and decision-makers rather than serving as symbolic representatives. Meaningful participation requires opportunities for AAC users to help identify priorities, shape agendas, and influence outcomes. Organizations that seek to promote equity and inclusion must move beyond consultation and toward genuine partnership with people who use AAC.

Second, rapid advances in artificial intelligence (AI) present both opportunities and challenges for the AAC community. AI has the potential to improve communication access, personalization, and efficiency. At the same time, important questions remain regarding autonomy, privacy, data ownership, and the preservation of authentic voice. As AI becomes increasingly integrated into AAC technologies, it is critical that AAC users remain actively involved in discussions about how these technologies are designed, implemented, and evaluated. Technological innovation should support, rather than replace, individual agency and self-expression.

Finally, stronger collaboration between AAC users, professional organizations, researchers, clinicians, and AAC vendors is needed. AAC users bring essential lived experience that can inform product design, feature development, training materials, and customer support. Creating formal opportunities for AAC users to provide input can help ensure that technologies better reflect the diverse needs, preferences, and goals of the people who rely on them. Such partnerships can contribute to more responsive, equitable, and user-centered AAC systems.

Taken together, these considerations highlight the importance of shared leadership, ethical innovation, and meaningful collaboration in shaping the future of AAC. The work of the SABER Committee demonstrates that advancing belonging, equity, and representation requires ongoing commitment and active engagement from all members of the AAC community. We look forward to continuing this important work and building on our progress to date.

Any USSAAC member interested in joining the SABER Committee is encouraged to email us at saber@ussaac.org.

...continued on page 11

AAC Around the World ... continued



Citation:

Senner, J. E., Quach, W., Chung, Y., Patterson, B., Goldman, A., Blackstone, S., & Post, K. A. (2025). Utilization of a single preferred AAC system in US schools, *Augmentative and Alternative Communication*. 1-9. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07434618.2025.2516763>

U.S. Congress. (2025). *H.R. 2263: Telehealth Coverage Act of 2025* (119th Congress). <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/BILLS-119hr2263ih/pdf/BILLS-119hr2263ih.pdf>

Introducing ISAAC-South Korea

ISAAC is thrilled to announce a new ISAAC Chapter - ISAAC-South Korea! Please join us in welcoming them to ISAAC.



ISAAC-South Korea
President
Kim Juhyeon



ISAAC-South Korea
Vice President
Kim Kyung Yang

ISAAC-South Korea is a newly established chapter that is just beginning its journey. Although we are at an early stage, our members have long been committed to promoting the communication rights of people with complex communication needs in South Korea. Through this chapter, we hope to strengthen AAC awareness, professional collaboration, research, training, and advocacy across the country.

In South Korea, many challenges still remain in the field of AAC, including limited access to a wide range of AAC devices and systems, a lack of information and public awareness, a shortage of trained AAC professionals, and insufficient government policies and support. ISAAC-South Korea hopes to contribute to addressing these challenges by promoting education, sharing resources, supporting professional development, and advocating for stronger policies that uphold the communication rights of people with disabilities.

Our ambition is to build a strong national network led by and centered on people who use AAC, people with disabilities, and their families. In our membership campaign, we especially hope to welcome AAC users, disabled people,

...continued on page 12

AAC Around the World ... continued



family members, and supporters, alongside professionals, researchers, service providers, and policy makers. We believe that the voices and lived experiences of AAC users and disabled people must guide the direction of our chapter.

As we move forward, one of our important goals is to collaborate closely with KSAAC, the existing AAC organization in South Korea, and to work together to strengthen the AAC community nationally and internationally.

We look forward to working closely with ISAAC and KSAAC as we grow as a chapter and contribute to a more communication-accessible society in South Korea.

Membership

Individuals wishing to take out membership in our new ISAAC-South Korea Chapter, will be able to do so beginning with the 2027 membership year. More information will be released during October 2026.

Read more about ISAAC-South Korea [on the ISAAC website](#).

News



ISAAC-NF



On June 13th, we organized our very first AAC Day, set in a small zoo. We welcomed 15 people who use AAC, along with several family members. The main goal of the day was to create opportunities for fun, connection, and interaction with others who rely on AAC in their daily lives. Participants represented a wide range of ages, from 4 to 19 years, making it a truly diverse and lively group.

In March and April of this year, we organised a series of webinars focusing on AAC and AI. Our board member and expert by experience, Ömer Güney shared his personal perspectives, based on the many innovations he has piloted himself. We were also joined by several industry partners: Smartbox presented their latest developments, alongside contributions from companies such as AssistiveWare and Tobii Dynavox. From KU Leuven, Ellen Rombouts offered academic insights into the opportunities AI presents for AAC users. [Webinarreeks; AI in OC - YouTube](#)

In April, a national children's TV programme aired a special episode focusing on AAC, helping to raise awareness among a broad audience. You can watch the episode [here](#).

We are also proud to share that we co-published a book on AAC together with enthusiastic parent and expert by experience [Mannen de Wildt](#).

Chapters interested in exploring an English translation are invited to reach out via voorzitter@isaac-nf.nl.

In addition, we have recently contacted a lawyer to seek legal advice regarding funding for AAC devices. In recent years, we have seen increasing challenges, with more insurance companies denying claims, often arguing that an app is sufficient. This is concerning, as prescribing professionals clearly indicate that dedicated AAC devices are necessary in many cases. Following this advice, we are now in direct contact with policymakers and politicians to address the implications and advocate for appropriate funding and access to AAC support. We will continue to follow this issue closely and advocate for appropriate access to AAC support on a national level.

...continued on page 14

News

... continued



We also want to share an update regarding our board. There has recently been a change, and we are pleased to announce that Gerna Scholte has taken on the role of president. We would like to sincerely thank Maartje Radstaake for her dedication, hard work, and passion over the past years. We also thank Kirsten Denis for her valuable work as a board member; Elise van der Kooi has now taken over her position.

ISAAC-Español



Colaboración entre ISAAC Internacional, PAHO e ISAAC español

Como parte de las iniciativas de cooperación internacional para fortalecer el acceso a la Comunicación Aumentativa y Alternativa (CAA), ISAAC Internacional ha establecido una colaboración con la Organización Panamericana de la Salud (PAHO/OPS) para el desarrollo de un ciclo de **cuatro webinars formativos**.

Esta serie abordará la aplicación de la CAA considerando las realidades y necesidades de los países apoyados por PAHO, promoviendo estrategias basadas en la evidencia y adaptadas a diversos contextos socioculturales y de recursos.

Los webinars serán impartidos por **miembros voluntarios de ISAAC Español**, quienes participarán como expositores y facilitadores gracias a su experiencia profesional y al valor que representa compartir estos contenidos en lengua española, favoreciendo así una mayor accesibilidad y alcance para la comunidad hispanohablante.

Aquí tienes una traducción con un estilo institucional y natural para una publicación de ISAAC:

Collaboration between ISAAC International, PAHO, and ISAAC Spanish

As part of its international cooperation initiatives to strengthen access to Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC), ISAAC International has established a collaboration with the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) to develop a series of **four educational webinars**.

...continued on page 15

News

... continued



This webinar series will address the implementation of AAC while taking into account the realities and needs of the countries supported by PAHO, promoting evidence-based strategies that can be adapted to a variety of sociocultural and resource contexts.

The webinars will be presented by **volunteer members of ISAAC Spanish**, who will contribute their expertise and experience while delivering the sessions in Spanish, helping to make this professional development opportunity more accessible to the Spanish-speaking community across the region.

ISAAC-Denmark



Spring has been busy in Isaac Denmark. We had a marvelous conference with 250 participants, a visit from Jørn Østvik and Kristine Stadsleiv from Norway, Alyssa Hillary Zisk from the USA, and a lot of Danish experts and skilled practitioners. Our AAC-users made

a photo session under the headline “my expression” – with a professional photographer, and a workshop to enhance the perfect text to underline the expression.

This time we also tried out making “Target group divided” knowledge sharing, helping professionals work with the same target group, - kindergarten, accommodation, school, to networking. Even though Denmark is a small country, we still have a distance between us.

Our Danish “Communication access” group made the first take of their promotion video, which will be used to enlighten people in society, shops, public institutions, and so on, about how to meet people with communication challenges. We are very excited to see the edited version.

Last week, Denmark got a new government – after 10 weeks of negotiations, they finally agreed on a coalition of primarily mid and left-wing parties. In Denmark, it means that we might have an opening to talk more about disability subjects, and maybe we can reach the new secretaries in the social and school area, while they are still finding their feet. Therefore, we have revived our political group and are working more closely

...continued on page 16

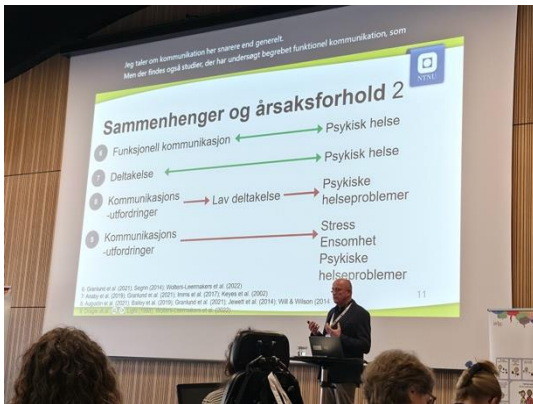
News

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together on writing letters to the secretaries of government departments.

And at least, we have established contact with the Danish association of SLP/SLTs, to unite our knowledge and forces to enhance the possibilities for people with communication needs and focus on their rights to be heard.



Jørn Østvik's Presentation

ISAAC-Italy



In June, ISAAC-Italy President Arianna Felicetti met up with ISAAC International Past President Meredith Allan in Rome, Italy.

This meeting allowed for the sharing of ideas, experiences, and perspectives for people with disabilities in both Italian and Australian contexts, as well as reflection on the essential role of communication as a tool for participation, self-determination, and citizenship.

The meeting was also attended by Dr. Fabrizio Corradi, National Coordinator of the ISAAC Italy Scientific Committee, who provided a valuable opportunity to reflect on the present and future of the ISAAC-Italy community.



Meredith Allan, Fabrizio Corradi, and Arianna Felicetti

ISAAC-Italy continues to organize events and work to promote a culture of AAC in Italy for the benefit of people with complex communication needs. Stay updated with ISAAC-Italy's initiatives on Facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/IsaacItaly>.

Chapters



ISAAC-Australia • www.isaacaustralia.com

ISAAC-Brazil • www.isaacbrasil.org.br

ISAAC-Canada • www.isaac-canada.org

ISAAC-Denmark • www.isaac.dk

ISAAC-Español • *Coming soon* - www.isaac-espanol.org

ISAAC-Francophone • www.isaac-fr.org

ISAAC-India • www.isaac.org.in

ISAAC-Israel • www.isaac.org.il

ISAAC-Italy • www.isaacitaly.it

ISAAC-NF • www.isaac-nf.nl

ISAAC-Norway • www.isaac.no

ISAAC-Poland • www.aac.org.pl

ISAAC-Singapore • www.isaac-singapore.org/

ISAAC-South Korea • *Coming soon!*

ISAAC-Taiwan • twsaac.blogspot.com

ISAAC-UK • www.communicationmatters.org.uk

ISAAC-US • www.ussaac.org

PWUAAC Online Chats



Visit [PWUAAC Online Chats](#) on the ISAAC website for information about the next scheduled chat.

ISAAC Webinars

Most ISAAC webinars and archived recordings are available as a benefit of membership, and accessed through the Members' Only portal. A limited number of [webinar recordings](#) will remain open to the public. Find out how to become an ISAAC member [here](#).

Contact Us

Do you have a question or comment? Please feel free to send an email to feedback@isaac-online.org

Our Vision & Mission



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 & Social Council.

Stay Connected

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](#).

Stay Social

Stay in the loop! Follow ISAAC news & views in the AAC community on our social media!



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The ISAAC Communicator

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