

Message from the ISAAC President

Meredith Allan

I am about to leave for the AGOSCI conference in Perth, Australia. It is always good to meet old friends and make new friends at conferences. The AGOSCI conference dinner is memorable for the dancing. This year the dancing will be to a live band! I am sure many of you will have seen highlights on various Facebook posts.

Preparations are well underway for the ISAAC conference in Cancún, México in August 2020. The Executive Board of ISAAC and 2020 Conference Co-Chairs met in Cancún during the second week of June for a site meeting and site inspections. Several hotels were inspected for access. The reports on each hotel will be made available to every ISAAC member. On the registration form there will be a box for physical access requirements, please state your needs succinctly. All the hotels we visited were willing to help as much as they could, and appreciated our honesty about physical access issues. I found the beds a bit high but I managed.

Communication access training will be offered to staff of the Convention Centre, hotels, and surrounding businesses. Managers were positive about this training, saying “we want to know how to communicate with our guests (who use AAC).”

The best part about Cancún is the nightlife! Restaurants and music are within short distances of most hotels. Margaritas (alcoholic or non-alcoholic versions) must be tried! Warning – they are huge and worth photographing.



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Lastly, I want to say that representing ISAAC at the United Nations was a phenomenal experience, worth the bureaucracy and challenging access needs (not least the only toilets for visitors were in basement). I hope ISAAC can be present at future Conferences of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.



[Meredith Allan](#)



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

From the Executive Director

Franklin Smith

Welcome to the September 2019 edition of *The ISAAC Communicator*. The ISAAC International Office continues its work on behalf of the membership around the world, and is pleased to advise on the following initiatives:

Conference 2020

Preparations for Conference 2020, to be held August 1st through August 6th, 2019, in Cancún, México's beautiful gateway to the Riviera Maya, are now well underway. The [Conference 2020 Call for Papers](#) is scheduled to close soon (**extended deadline: October 15th**), so make sure you get your proposals in by then! Our [Conference 2020 Co-Chairs](#) and the entire Conference 2020 Leadership Team are now in "full conference mode."

Conference 2020 is being held at the [Cancún International Convention Centre, or ICC](#). The decision to host Conference 2020 at the Cancún ICC was a collaborative one taken by the entire Conference 2020 Leadership Team, with full consideration for accessibility, ease of travel, hotel availability, and cost. The full press release on this announcement can be read on the [ISAAC website](#), or directly by clicking [here](#).

Online registration for Conference 2020 is also scheduled to open early during Q4 2019. We will send out an eblast and advise further on an opening date for registration in the coming weeks. The same notification will also be posted on the [ISAAC Conference 2020 website](#).

We are thrilled with the response received so far by our exhibitors and sponsors. Booth space sales for Conference 2020 are moving along very nicely, and the exhibit hall floor map is live on our [website](#).

A number of initiatives are currently being planned to coincide with Conference 2020 aimed at supporting one of the overriding objectives for hosting Conference 2020 in México, namely the promotion of AAC within the Spanish-speaking world and the creation of the Spanish-language Chapter of ISAAC, ISAAC-Español. We look forward to releasing more information in the coming months.

World Health Organization (WHO)

ISAAC International was thrilled to be represented this past July at the WHO's Second Global Rehabilitation 2030 Meeting in Geneva. ISAAC-Italy's very own Elena Radici was our representative, and more information about this important meeting can be found by clicking [here](#).

Thanks to Elena and ISAAC-Italy for representing the field of AAC at this important international meeting.

AAATE 2019 – Bologna, Italy

ISAAC International was proud to be a [collaborating organization](#) at this past August's AAATE 2019 conference, in Bologna. We would like to express our thanks to Annalu Waller (University of Dundee) and Simon Judge (The University of Sheffield) for being part of the Scientific Review committee, as well as to our friends at ISAAC-Italy, notably Stefania La Rosa and Elena Radici, for being on-site at AAATE2019. ISAAC International was proud to provide its support for this important European AAC-related conference.

Webinars and AAC Awareness Month 2019

Working with USSAAC and other ISAAC stakeholders around the world, we have been able to present a number of extremely interesting and well-received webinars so far this year. All webinars are

received we webinars so far this Year. All webinars are available for viewing from our archives by clicking [here](#). A full schedule of upcoming webinars can be found on the ISAAC website, by clicking [here](#).



We have also now been in touch with our past conference sponsors and exhibitors, and have received a number of expressions of interest from them to also present at an upcoming ISAAC webinar during the balance of 2019 and into 2020. We will update our online webinar schedule as these are confirmed, so please do check back regularly.

For AAC Awareness Month 2019, we are once again encouraging all ISAAC Chapters, Council Members, and stakeholders around the world to share with us their AAC Awareness Month activities. There is no better way to exemplify this year's AAC Awareness Month theme, "Communication Beyond Borders," than by holding AAC-related events around the world.

As a means of furthering AAC awareness worldwide, ISAAC International will be extending promotion of AAC awareness beyond 2019 and into 2020, and linking it with the promotion of ISAAC Conference 2020. Please check our website regularly for more information, and do stay on top of your social media feeds for information as we release it.

Membership 2020

ISAAC recently communicated with our Council regarding membership rates for the 2020 Membership year, which are being held at the 2019 rates. ISAAC International will be commencing its own membership renewal during the October/November timeframe, as

well as working with our Chapter partners, ISAAC-Australia, ISAAC-Canada, and ISAAC-US (USSAAC). If you are a member through either ISAAC International or one of these Chapters, you will be sent an email directly from ISAAC International with all of your membership renewal information. If you are a member through another of our Chapters, please do get in touch with them directly should you have any membership renewal questions.

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](#)

#SocialMedia

New! We have opened Conference 2020 pages on both Facebook and Twitter @ISAACconf2020

Please note: The ISAAC BUILD RESOURCES Facebook group is no longer active. For new posts related to BUILD, the ISAAC committee that focuses on practical ways to offer support for countries where AAC is emerging, please follow <https://www.facebook.com/ISAACBUILDAAC/>



The ISAAC CSWN Newsletter is published twice yearly. It offers practical information to those interested in AAC and assistive technology in areas of the world where these fields are emerging. Its aims are to present new ideas that can be adapted across settings. [Click here](#) to view the July issue.

ISAAC 2020



A Message for Exhibitors and Sponsors

Hello/Hola!

ISAAC is excited to kick-start our Sponsorship and Exhibitor program in support of the 19th Biennial ISAAC Conference taking place from August 1st through August 6th, 2020 at the Cancún International Convention Center in beautiful Cancún, México. Sponsors and Exhibitors will be featured throughout the ISAAC Conference. The Exhibitor Hall is open from August 3rd – August 6th.

In addition to participating as an Exhibitor, there are many exciting sponsorship opportunities available through which you can promote your company's brand to an international audience. We will help create a sponsorship/exhibitor package that's right for you.

Judy Shapiro (ISAAC Sponsorship Specialist) and Tony Needer (ISAAC Exhibitor Sales Specialist) are committed to helping your company achieve a most rewarding Conference experience.

We will be reaching out to you in the coming weeks. Get ready to join ISAAC on the road to a successful 2020 Conference in Cancún, México.

Contact:

Judy Shapiro for [ISAAC 2020 Sponsorship info](#)

Tony Needer for [ISAAC 2020 Exhibitor info](#)

Questions? Check out the
[ISAAC 2020 FAQ](#)



News



WHO Second Global Rehabilitation 2030 Meeting

ISAAC is busy supporting worldwide efforts on behalf of AAC families by attending a key World Health Organization (WHO) meeting this past July 8–9 in Geneva, Switzerland. Elena Radici (ISAAC-Italy) represented ISAAC at this meeting. Here is an excerpt from her report:

“The main goal of the meeting was to share with participants the materials and experiences related to rehabilitation that WHO has developed over the years.



The materials (e.g. the ‘Guide for Action’) were created so that countries would have a guide to follow, and resources and data they can present to their governments (primarily to make rehabilitation a political matter), in order to facilitate the implementation of a strategic plan. The objective is to generate awareness (e.g. by creating policy at political levels) and to improve rehabilitation, especially in terms of functioning. Several countries shared their experiences in applying a strategic plan within their countries.”

You will find on [this website](#) some of the documents shared with participants.”

- submitted by Elena Radici, ISAAC-Italy

To read the full report and access a number of WHO resources in PDF format, please [click here](#).



ISAAC-Denmark

To mark the 30th birthday of [ISAAC-Denmark](#) as well as AAC Awareness Month, we have planned a seminar for October 7-8, 2019. Gloria Soto will give a presentation on culturally responsive principles and strategies in the following areas of AAC practice: AAC programming and intervention; collaborative teaming; development of AAC applications to support language and literacy skills; and AAC professional development. Dr. Soto is a Professor in the Department of Special Education and Department of Speech, Language and Hearing Sciences at San Francisco State University, and a co-chair of ISAAC Conference 2020.

Another guest speaker, Lorna Bartram, is a linguist at Sahlgrenska University Hospital in Gothenburg, Sweden. She will talk about how to use multilingual AAC to make communication possible between people who do not share the same language.

Mascha Legel, together with Gloria Soto, will explore the topic, Film as Observable Communication (FaOC). Evidence-based strategies and practical materials can be used to support the development of personal narrative skills in children who use AAC. Mascha Legel is a Visual Anthropologist doing research in the field of Film and AAC at the Radboud University in Nijmegen, Netherlands.

- Also in October, ISAAC-Denmark will host our annual Autumn Gathering for AAC users. This year the focus is on communicative equality.

News +



The plan is to work on a project to create small videos to inform the Danish population about how AAC users need better communicative accessibility in order to express their opinions in public.

- On October 3-5, the Nordic cerebral palsy organizations are getting together in Stockholm, Sweden. This year the theme is communication, and ISAAC has been asked to attend and present at the meeting.

Political Level Efforts

- Last summer a new government was elected in Denmark and new ministers were appointed. ISAAC-Denmark sent a welcome mail to the ministers of Children and Education, Social Affairs and the Interior, Health and Higher Education, and Science. We introduced them to ISAAC-Denmark and told them about the need for awareness and action to support communication and AAC for all persons with complex communication needs, an initiative that spans the four ministries. Reciprocal coordination is needed.
- ISAAC Denmark has contacted all University Colleges in Denmark to encourage collaboration on further education in AAC. Today we have a limited number of training courses for teachers, pedagogues, therapists, etc., and we have learned that some have been cancelled because of too few participants. It would be appropriate to collaborate and make sure that this kind of education is available through at least one of the colleges.

- submitted by Birgitte Brandt, Chair, ISAAC-Denmark

ISAAC-Canada

AAC Awareness 2019



With fall in full swing, we invite you to begin planning your AAC Awareness events. This year in Canada, October 12th has been designated as 2019 AAC Awareness Day. Remember, however, that the entire month of October is AAC Awareness Month, which gives ample time to participate in, prepare, and host an event.

ISAAC-Canada's goal and vision is to raise awareness of augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) across the country and to inform the public about the many different ways in which people communicate. Please remember to share your stories and photos by sending them to lrobinson@hollandbloorview.ca. All submissions will be included in the 2019 fall edition of *Figuratively Speaking* and must be received no later than November 1st in order to meet the translation deadline. Each submission will be entered into a draw for a free ISAAC-Canada Membership for a person who uses AAC.

Please tag #AACaware19 on social media during the month of October! For information and updates about events around the world, please be sure to visit the [ISAAC website](#).

We look forward to hearing about all of the events around the country!

- submitted by Laurel Robinson, ISAAC-Canada, Ontario

Also from ISAAC-Canada, a Remembrance page on their website honours Paul Marshall and Anne Warrick, two people whose lives contributed so much to the ISAAC community. [Click here](#) to read about them. If you would like to similarly honour a Canadian in the AAC field, contact ISAAC-Canada.

News +



From Singapore

Students and teachers from National Chiayi University, Special Education Department, Taiwan, visited [the Specialised Assistive Technology Centre, SPD](#), at the Enabling Village, Singapore, for a Learning Journey on AAC in July 2019.

The group was introduced to a range of low-tech, mid-tech and high-tech AAC systems, as well as a variety of switches and mounting systems. SPD's assistive technology professionals also provided examples of how the knowledge presented could be practically applied to individuals with complex communication needs.

It was a pleasure hosting the team, and SPD looks forward to further networking and collaboration.

- submitted by Deborah Yong, Speech and Language Therapist, SPD, and member of ISAAC's BUILD AAC Committee 2018-2020



Photos taken at
SPD, Singapore

Communication Matters

Congratulations to Communication Matters (ISAAC-UK) on the launch of their beautiful new website! Check it out [here](#).

USSAAC

We are pleased to pass along the latest issue of the [Wisconsin AAC Network Newsletter](#), submitted by Mike Hipple, Director of Membership for USSAAC (ISAAC-US).

To view the "Communication Bill of Rights" cited under heading *The Good Life*, [click here](#).

AAATE 2019

AAATE 2019, *Global Challenges in Assistive Technology: Research, Policy & Practice* took place in August, in Bologna, Italy (see page 3 for details on ISAAC's participation). The conference brought together 350 experts from 41 countries and featured 233 scientific presentations.

One of the tangible outcomes of the conference was the creation of a Call for Action, titled *The Bologna Declaration*. You can read it [here](#) and also lend your support with an endorsement, as an organization or an individual.

Juan Bornman Recognized for Excellence in South Africa

Congratulations to Prof Juan Bornman, Director of the Centre for AAC at the University of Pretoria, and ISAAC President-Elect, on being honoured as one of the Mail & Guardian's "Women Changing South Africa." The annual list celebrates the transformative work done by women in South Africa. Read Juan's profile [here](#).

Events



AAC Awareness Month 2019

[International AAC Awareness Month](#) is celebrated worldwide each October. The goal is to raise awareness about AAC and the many different ways people are able to communicate using AAC.

This year's theme is "Communication Beyond Borders," to complement our ISAAC 2020 conference theme.

We are pleased to present the first in a series of short AAC Awareness video messages to launch our month-long celebration. The video is available for viewing [here](#).



Thanks to Lateef McLeod, Chair of the ISAAC LEAD Committee, for recording the theme message. Much appreciation to the ISAAC 2020 Conference Team for providing the opening video clip. The full ISAAC 2020 video can be viewed [here](#).



4th International Assistive Technology & AAC Conference, ATAAC 2019, Zagreb, October 15-17, 2019

Leading AT and AAC experts and manufacturers will be presenting information, research, and products, and sharing experiences and valuable advice on working with children and persons with communication support needs.

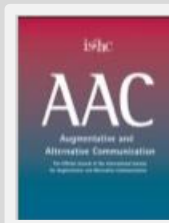
The [ATAAC 2019](#) conference can be attended in person or watched online.

You are encouraged to attend and share your work with colleagues all around the world.

More information can be found on the ATAAC 2019 website, and regular updates can be found on the [ATAAC Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) profile.

AAC Current Issue

Follow @AACJourn on Twitter!



Volume 35, 2019



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ISAAC Calendar of Events

[View on the ISAAC website](#)

Chapters



ISAAC-Australia • www.isaacaustralia.com

ISAAC-Brazil • www.isaacbrasil.org.br

ISAAC-Canada • www.isaac-canada.org

ISAAC-Denmark • www.isaac.dk

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 • [facebook](https://www.facebook.com/isaacpoland)

ISAAC-Sweden • www.isaac-sverige.se

ISAAC-Taiwan • <http://twisaac.blogspot.com>

ISAAC-UK • www.communicationmatters.org.uk

ISAAC-US • www.ussaac.org

Contact Us

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

Council News

In the June issue, I told you about the working groups created as a result of the 2018 Council meeting (Australia). They are now active! Here are the groups, with their goals and lead contacts:

1. UNCRPD (UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities)
Step: 1 – Identify who is currently involved with UNCRPD, specific to communication.

Lead: [Meredith Prain](#)

2. Communication Access Standards (symbol)

Goal: Identify existing symbols, features and regulations for use.

Lead: [Elena Radici](#)

3. Communication Partner Strategies (previously called practical AAC booklet)

Goal: Bring awareness of AAC and be a resource for training people for AAC conferences.

Lead: [Elena Radici](#)

4. Access to Social Media Internationally

Goal: look at what exists and look ahead

Lead: [Meredith Allan](#)

I want to take this opportunity to send a “Thank You” to all who volunteered and contributed to the creation of these groups. If anyone would still like to be a part of any of these working groups, please contact me!

[Nadia Browning](#)

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](mailto:Nola.Millin).

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Stay Social

Keep informed about ISAAC news & stay in touch with the AAC community on our social media!

