

## Building Positive Relationships with Direct Support Professionals/Personal Care Attendants: Recommendations from AAC Users

April 3, 2024

7:00-8:00 p.m. EDT

PRESENTED BY: Lance McLemore, David McNaughton,  
Tracy Rackensperger and Hannah Springfield



Tracy  
Rackensperger



David  
McNaughton



Lance  
McLemore



Hannah  
Springfield

### ABOUT THE PRESENTERS:

**Lance McLemore** provides support to the RERC on AAC. He graduated from the University of Alabama, Huntsville with a Bachelor of Arts in studio art and philosophy. He has used AAC since college. He is a recipient of the Prentke AAC Distinguished Lecture Award. He serves as a Research Investigator for the RERC on AAC Consumer Forum Research Team

**David McNaughton, Ph.D.** is a Professor of Special Education at Pennsylvania State University. His teaching and research focus on the development of effective educational programs for individuals with significant support needs. He is especially interested in how AAC design and support to achieve important educational and vocational outcomes. He is a Project Co-Leader of Training and Dissemination for the RERC on AAC.

**Tracy Rackensperger, Ph.D.** currently serves as the Public Service Assistant within the College of Family and Consumer Sciences, Institute on Human Development and Disability at the University of Georgia. She leads the Institute's AAC activities and oversees projects related to the employment of people with disabilities. She has published scholarly works regarding augmentative communication and has personally used AAC for over 40 years. She is a Project Co-Leader for Training and Dissemination with the RERC on AAC.

**Hannah Springfield** is a graduate of the University of Georgia and is currently working for a medical research company. She also provides direct support to Dr. Rackensperger on business and extreme sports trips. She is an aspiring medical student and hopes to become a doctor. She serves as an advisor on the RERC on AAC project activities concerning DSPs.

**SEMINAR DESCRIPTION:** Support professionals such as Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) and Personal Care Attendants (PCAs) play vital roles in the lives of many users of AAC. DSPs and PCAs enable many AAC users to participate in such areas as education, employment, communication, community events, transportation, health care, safety and security, friendships and relationships, leisure, and faith communities. AAC users must have access to DSPs and PCAs who can support them appropriately. This webinar highlights findings of an ongoing research project (<https://rerc-aac.psu.edu/2024/01/07/communication-with-direct-support-professionals-the-experiences-of-aac-users/>) regarding the experiences of AAC users in working with DSPs and PCAs. We will share what we learned about how effective communication with support professionals can enhance participation in independent living and community activities for AAC users. Recommendations derived from the findings will be discussed as well.

**MODERATED BY:** Alison Pentland

*SLPs who are USSAAC/ISAAC members may have their participation in this webinar reported for ASHA CEUs at no charge. Non-members must pay a \$25 reporting fee.*

*This course is offered for 0.1 ASHA CEUs (Introductory level; Professional area).*

**PARTICIPANTS WILL BE ABLE TO:**

1. Define the role of support professionals in the lives of people using AAC
2. Describe ways support professionals can assist AAC users in community participation.
3. Describe ways support professionals may hinder AAC users in community participation.
4. Share strategies for building positive relationships with support professionals.

**TIME ORDERED AGENDA:**

- 5 minutes: Introduction of Speakers, USSAAC and topic
- 5 minutes: The importance of DSPs and PCAs in the lives of people using AAC
- 15 minutes: How support professionals can assist people using AAC to participate their communities
- 15 minutes: How support professionals may hinder people using AAC from participating in their communities
- 15 minutes: Strategies for building positive relationships with support professionals and enhancing AAC users' community participation
- 5 minutes: Q & A

*American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) CEUs in speech-language pathology and audiology are awarded by the ASHA CE Registry upon receipt of the CEU Participant Form from the ASHA Approved CE Provider, USSAAC. CEU Participant Forms are available online at Registration. ASHA CEUs are provided to full registrations. This program is offered for .1 ASHA CEUs (Introductory Level, Professional Area).*

**ASHA Disclosures:**

**Speakers**

Financial:

Lance McLemore and Hannah Springfield are paid by the RERC on AAC.

David McNaughton is a salaried faculty member at Pennsylvania State University, and part of his salary is paid by RERC on AAC.

Tracy Rackensperger is a salaried faculty member at the University of Georgia and is compensated by the RERC on AAC.

Nonfinancial:

Lance McLemore, Hannah Springfield and David McNaughton have no nonfinancial disclosures to report

Tracy Rackensperger is the president of USSAAC.

**Moderator**

Financial:

Alison Pentland has no financial disclosures to report.

Nonfinancial:

Alison Pentland is a USSAAC Board Member.

To register for this Webinar please go to the following link:

[https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_dGnReQaSG6rSeFI9Y4r8w](https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_dGnReQaSG6rSeFI9Y4r8w)

PLEASE NOTE: Only the first 150 attendees to log into the webinar will be guaranteed spots.

### USSAAC EDUCATION COMMITTEE:

Betsy Caporale, Kate DeJarnette, Nicole Gallagher, Richard Hurtig,  
Mili Mathew, Michelle Phillipy, Wendy Quach, Sharon Redmon

## about USSAAC

The United States Society for Augmentative and Alternative Communication (USSAAC) is the national chapter of the International Society for Augmentative and Alternative Communication (ISAAC). As the United States' only non-profit organization dedicated to supporting the entire AAC community, USSAAC provides an invaluable role, working to ensure that individuals who could benefit from AAC have access to the technology and services they need.

Benefits of membership include, but are not limited to:

- *Free access to USSAAC webinar series with ASHA CEUs and USSAAC Twitter chats*
- *Advocacy for maintaining & expanding access to AAC systems and services*
- *Discount to ISAAC Conferences*
- *SpeakUp publication/Blog*
- *Information updates on USSAAC website, social platforms and member finder*
- *Membership in ISAAC with their additional benefits*

**FOLLOW US:**

**@USSAAC**  
**#USSAACChat**

**CONTACT US:**

**[info@ussaac.org](mailto:info@ussaac.org)**

**JOIN US:**

**[ussaac.org/membership](http://ussaac.org/membership)**



**ASHA CE**  
**APPROVED PROVIDER**

**United States Society for  
Augmentative and Alternative  
Communication**