

UAAACT News

Utah Augmentative, Alternative, Assistive Communication And Technology Teams

UAAACT Web Site: www/uaaact.org

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It is difficult to believe that we are already a month into the school year and it is even more difficult to believe that the stores have a mixture of fall holidays and Christmas decorations. Now that we are back in the “swing” of things, we should have our goals set for another successful year with our students, doing high level evaluations and planning on taking advantage of the upcoming trainings. Some members will soon be enjoying the educational benefits of attending “Closing the Gap” conference. We look forward to featuring new ideas and information in the next newsletter that were gathered at the conference.

Mark your Calendars for Upcoming Events

Nov. 10, 2011
1:00 – 3:00

TouchChat HD for iPad
Scott Baggaley sbaggaley@utah.gov

Dec. 8, 2011
1:00 -3:00

TASP Training
Craig Boogaard – cboogaar@utah.gov

Jan. 19, 2012
1:00 – 3:00

File Maker Pro Training
Scott Baggaley - sbaggaley@utah.gov

Mar. 2-3, 2012

UCET Conference at Jordan High School in Sandy, UT

Please save these dates. Since we are not having a UAAACT Conference this year, the UCET Conference will be our most significant training opportunity. The UAAACT Project will cover your expenses related to this conference. UAAACT Team Leaders attending Closing the Gap will present at the UCET Conference and share what they learned at CTG.

Team Leaders – please submit your UCET Conference session proposals online at:

<http://www.ucet.org/inUCETnew/conference/>

Click on “Presenter Proposals and Registration”

From Our Leader

Craig Boogaard

Just Give the Kid an iPad?

Some parents and teachers believe iPads are the solution for every student who might benefit from assistive technology. Assistive technology experts across the country are hearing, “My student needs an AT assessment.” The AT experts then asks, “So the student will be able to do what?” Caller: “So he can get an iPad.” The AT expert then asks, “What educational tasks will the iPad support?”

Caller: “What???”

“The bottom line is, (as Mary Keeney states), “we need to know information about the student, the environments and tasks (SETT) before we choose tools.”

An iPad is a great tool in some circumstances. I use mine daily, but typically not in my work setting, because it does not do enough to support me across the multiple environments in which I need to work.”

“That being said – for those children for whom this is the right tool, I will, as will we all, go to the mat to defend the student’s right to have the right tool at the right time! If that is an iPad, provide it! If it is a laptop or a pencil grip, provide it! But as we move forward incorporating new, exciting technologies in our tool kits, remember match tools to the student, environment and tasks, not the other way around.”

Thanks to Joan Breslin Larson, Mary Keeney and the QIAT listserv for the ideas in this brief article. For information on the QIAT listserv, See:

http://nari.uky.edu/assoc_projects/qiat/signup.html

E-Mail

We have been told by many UAAACT members that they are not receiving our email messages. I am trying a new email address procedure to see if we can successfully communicate. Be sure to update your e-mail with me so that we can be sure to get e-mails out to you.

Craig

Council Assignments for 2011-12

Council Chair	Nadean Lescoe
UAAACT Reporting	Denise Warren
Conference Details	Chad Fletcher
Conference Program	
Chair	Melanie Bowen
Equipment Chair	Judy Robert
Newsletter Editor	Suzanne Anderson
Assistant Newsletter	Britta Scullion

New UAAACT Team Members

Shannon Brown & Mary Alice Dredge
Team S

Shannon Goodpasture & Grace Storm –
Team X

Nathan Pope & Melanie Adams – **Team D**
Diane Adams – **Team I**

Erek Engar – **Team Leader Team A**

Aimee Francis – **Team B**

UAAACT Members are sad to hear that **Jim West** – Davis Team A has retired. Jim has made a large contribution to UAAACT for many years. He will be greatly missed by everyone.



Ordering Procedures

When ordering, please let Lynn Marcoux know the item you want based on the price of the usual vendor/company. Lynn will do the bargain shopping as she follows strict procurement procedures which are monitored by state auditors. Team leaders may submit orders as needed, but April 1, 2012 is the last day to order team equipment. This is NOT an April Fools joke. ☺

Reminder

UAAACT Leadership Council Meetings

If there are questions, suggestions or information that your team would like to have discussed by the Leadership Council, please send an e-mail to Craig so that it can be put on the agenda to be discussed at their meetings listed below.

Nov. 9, 2011 – 10:30 - The Computer Center
Jan 25, 2012 – Vision system or in Room 300 -
Buffmire Building
April 18, 2012 – 10:30 – Computer Center

Conference Attendance

Being a member of a UAAACT Team is a privilege for all of us. We enjoy the opportunity to attend training sessions and to attend the State UAAACT conference. Some will be able to attend a National Conference. It is important that training sessions are attended whether locally or out of state. This is not a time to do other things when you are scheduled to be in attendance at planned training sessions or during conference sessions. If we abuse these opportunities -- then these opportunities will not be made available for us! It isn't a day off or a vacation.



AbleNet

www.ablenetinc.com

Re-introducing Talk Trac

“TalkTrac is back and it’s better than ever,” said AbleNet representative in a recent announcement.

This device features four messages and two levels for a total of eight individual messages. This is a wearable communication tool. It is a perfect companion for children and adults on the autism spectrum, helping them to feel more comfortable in the classroom and out in their community.



Responsible Alert System

“With Responsible, help is just a phone call away.”

This innovative product works with your existing phone line, allowing you to program up to four phone numbers to call on a single push of a button. Alert system new to AbleNet.



Questions and Answers

Discussion Column

Apps 101: Exploring iPhone, iPod, iPad

Article from PACER Center in Minneapolis
by: Julie Holmquist

The debut of the iPod touch and iPhone in 2007 and the iPad in 2010 has created new opportunities for children with disabilities. With their touch-screen technology, mainstream look, built-in accessibility features and thousands of web apps (application) that are inexpensive and readily available, these technologies offer a wealth of new educational tools worth exploring, says Bridget Gilormini, director of PACER's Simon Technology Center (STC). "Part of their appeal is that these devices don't say, "I'm an assistive technology device." A lot of students don't want to be different than others, and by using an iPod or an iPad, they're not."

The devices can also open new worlds for children with disabilities, a fact highlighted in a 2010 New York Time article about 7 year old Owen Cain. Owen is medically fragile and has lost nearly all of his muscle movement, but the iPad's sensitive touch screen allows him to turn the pages of an e-book by himself.

Apple includes assistive technology (AT) in its products as standard features at no additional cost. For example, the iPhone, iPad, iPod and Mac OS X include screen magnification and VoiceOver, a screen-access technology for people who are blind and have visual impairments. Apple provides many other accessibility features for vision, hearing or cognitive impairments. In addition to the many built-in accessibility features provided by Apple, a variety of hardware and software products are sold separately that adapt the iPhone, iPad and iPod touch for special needs.

Apps 101

Before deciding if one of these devices would be helpful, families should ask the following questions:

- What is the purpose of the device?
- How will the user access the device?
- How long will the battery last compared to other AT devices?

When considering a device, parents and educators are usually concerned with durability, sound and any barriers to its use. Jonathan Campbell, assistive technology specialist with the STC states:

"The iPad is not as fragile as a traditional laptop. The glass is reinforced "gorilla glass," the aluminum back is sturdy, and it has no sharp edges. It's a pretty tough piece of machinery and it's scratch resistant. It can be damaged by water, however. Purchasing a rubber case for the iPad will make it even more durable."

Adding inexpensive speakers gives the iPad good sound capabilities, and other add-ons allow users to use a switch with the device. Families should realize, however, that not every app will be compatible with all accessibility features and hardware add-ons.

Free Webinar Training

Many of the companies that produce and support Assistive Technology, have begun to notify us of free training. The buzz word is Webinar. AbleNet just had a course offered entitled: "Assitive Technology throughout the Pediatric Rehabilitation Process" This webinar was a three part series. Most of them last only for an hour and a person can receive CEU credit. Feedback seems to generally be an A+ for information presented.

Watch your e-mail for announcements of these webinar sessions. You can also log onto the web pages for these companies and find a listing of classes being offered.

Recommended apps for Children with Disabilities

Keeping in mind that there are thousands of apps, with new ones on the market every day, PACER's Simon Technology Center shares its top app choices in several categories for families and professionals to explore.

Books and Reading:

iBooks, which uses the popular open book format ePub (many can be downloaded from from the library); Vooks, Audiobooks

Autism: Storykit, iPrompts, Picture Planner

Communication: Proloquo2Go, Sounding Board, Talk Assist.

Organization: Toodledo, reQuail, iPlanner

For text to speech/speech to text:

Neo Paul/Kate/Julie, Dragon – Dragon search, Google Translate

Early Childhood:

ABC Phonics, Animal Writing HD, I hear Ewe, Peekaboo

Special Education:

IEP Checklist, Percentally, ArtikPix

Medical: Medsy, ICE (In Case of Emergency), WebMD

Sensory/Cause and Effect:

Pocket Pond, Pet the Animals, Gloop

Timer and Choice:

IChoose, TymeLynz, Time Timer

Art and Music:

Toontastic, Toy Story, ComicStrip

Social Studies/Science:

Experimenter, Periodic Table, This Day in History

Additional web sites with excellent ideas on apps for iPad and iPod Touches.

Apps for Literacy Support by Greg O'Connor
<http://www.spectronicsinoz.com/blog/resources/2010/11/apps-for-literacy-support/>

Setting up an iTunes account without a credit card (available only for free apps)
<http://support.apple.com/kb/HT2534>

Anita's blog on Education Apps
<http://www.spectronicsinoz.com/blog/uncategorized/2010/09/education-apps-and-and-resources-for-the-ipad-and-iphone/>

Ricky Buchanan's blog about information on Apple and Mac products for users who have a disability.
<http://atmac.org/>

Educational Apps review
<http://ieducationappsreview.ning.com/>

iPad Curriculum is a collection of the best in applications, practices, and deployment of the iPad as a learning device.
<http://www.ipadcurriculum.com/>

Carolann Cormier's list of apps for education
<http://www.connsensebulletin.com/2010/10/apps-for-education-update/>



Notes from the Leadership Council

Nadean S. Lescoe
Council Chair

As I prepared the team summary report for the 2010-2011 school year, I was taken back by the sheer number of students with disabilities, whose lives are affected by the UAAACT Project.

In spite of increased classroom or caseload size, pay cuts, and reduced benefits, we as UAAACT members continue to hold ourselves to the highest standard as providers of AAC to those students who rely on technology to access education. Many team members serve in these positions in addition to their regular assignments. Utah's UAAACT team members work tirelessly, to gain education, knowledge, training, and to develop materials that serve to increase the positive outcome for our students with disabilities.

With the new school year beginning, we must remember that we can be a valuable resource for students, parents, teachers, and administrators. Many people look to us for solutions to some very "difficult situations." It is our commitment to the students and their families that make the UAAACT project so successful, and allows funding to continue.

As member of the UAAACT Leadership Council, we commend each of you for your diligence and commitment to our AAC population. We wish you the best success in the coming school year.

2010-2011 School Year AAACT Totals:

2,870	Students served
27,817	Hours of service
4,929	Equipment items provided

"Way to go UAAACT State Teams"



Contact Information for the Leadership Council Members

If you have questions or suggestions, contact the Council member for your area or contact **Craig Boogaard** (801) 887-9533 Fax: (801) 887-9382

Nadean Lescoe (Ogden City, Box Elder, Cache and Logan) (801) 737-8932

Britta Scullion (Granite/Murray, Granite, Canyons, and Salt Lake/Tooele) (801) 826-7200

Denise Warren (Davis, Weber, USDB) (801) 464-2045

Chad Fletcher (Kane/Garfield, Washington, Juab/Sanpete/Sevier/Piute and Iron/Millard/Beaver) (435) 592-3306

Melanie Bowen (Park City/Summit/Morgan/Rich, Grand/San Juan, Carbon/Emery and Duchesne/Uintah/Daggett) (435) 783-4318

Judy Roberts (Alpine/Wasatch, Jordan, Nebo, And Alpine/Provo) (801) 567-8421

Notes

In working with and evaluating students, remembered and don't forget the benefits and uses of low tech materials. It is essential to build a strong foundation under these students. They must understand their functional environment before they can use more elaborate materials or equipment. In a very strong technology world we hope for an answer to best helping students. Find ways to do both. Below is an article published a number of years ago

A Case for Teaching Functional Skills

It is not uncommon for instruction of students with moderate to severe disabilities to be based on a developmental sequence of skills. A dilemma then results when an attempt is made to provide instructional skills failed at a particular developmental level or mental age into additional tasks to be taught. Not only were these developmental benchmarks never intended to be used in this manner, but the result is that students spend a majority of their school day being taught skills that are artificial and/or age inappropriate. Given the time that it takes students with moderate to severe disabilities to acquire and maintain functional skills, there is no time or justification for devoting instruction to teaching items that are selected from a developmentally based hierarchy of supposed "pre-requisite" skills. A scenario of the outcome for one such student is portrayed below.

My brother is 18 years old. He has an IQ of 30-40 and has been in school for 12 years. My brother has always attended an elementary school. He has had a number of years of individualized instruction and has learned to do a lot of things!

My brother can no do lots of things he couldn't do before!

He can put 100 pegs in a board in less than 10 minutes while in his seat with 95% accuracy.
BUT, he can't put quarters in vending machines.

Upon command, he can touch his nose, shoulder, leg, foot, hair and ear. He's still working on wrist, ankle and hips.

BUT, he can't blow his nose when needed.

He can now do a 12 piece Big Bird puzzle with 100% accuracy and color the Easter Bunny while staying in the lines.

BUT, he prefers music. However, he was never taught how to use a radio or a tape player.

He can now fold primary paper in halves and even quarters.

BUT, he can't fold his clothes.

He can sort blocks by color; up to 10 different colors!

BUT, he can't sort clothes; whites from colors for washing.

He can roll Play-Doh and make wonderful clay snakes.

BUT, he can't roll bread dough and cut out biscuits.

He can string beads in alternating colors and match it to a pattern on a DLM card.

BUT, he can't lace his shoes.

He can sing his ABCs and tell me names of all the letters of the alphabet when presented on a card in upper case with 80% accuracy.

BUT, he can't tell the men's room from the ladies room when we go to McDonald's.

He can be told it's cloudy/rainy and take a black felt cloud and put it on the day of the week on an enlarged calendar (with assistance).

BUT, he still goes out in the rain without a raincoat.

He can walk a balance beam, side ways and backwards.

BUT, he can't walk up the stairs or bleachers unassisted in the gym to go to a basketball game.

He can count to 100 by rote memory.

BUT, he doesn't know how many dollars to pay the cashier for a \$2.59 McDonald's coupon special.

Continued on page 8

Continued from page 7

He can put the cube in the box, under the box,
beside the box and behind the box.

**BUT, he can't find the trash bin in McDonald's
and empty his trash in it.**

He can sit in a circle with appropriate behavior
and sing songs and play "Duck, Duck, Goose."

**BUT, nobody else his age in his neighborhood
seems to want to do that.**

I GUESS HE'S JUST NOT READY YET !

Adapted from Preston Lewis, TASH Newsletter,
December, 1987
Functional Skills Curriculum Guide
Special School District of St. Louis County
(Taken from a Web site that I can't find listed anymore)

Look for ways to include Academic (core) information.

Suggest the following:

Special Needs Curriculum Programs
Ablenetinc.com/curriculum software

Santa Maria-Bonita School District
Web site. Grade level language
Houghton Mifflin . Vocabulary words
with pictures and additional
information. All grade levels.

Teach Dolch words using "Writing with
Symbols"



News 2 You (N2Y) continues to make great changes and upgrades. If you aren't familiar with News2You then go to: n2vinc@n2y.com Although this is a subscription program, it is well worth the money. Special Education teachers love the weekly newspaper. It is educational and can be printed for use in the classroom at the level of functioning of the students.

This year they have added: Unique Learning System curriculum and SymbolStix ONLINE symbol set.

News-2 -You is an interactive homepage that allows you to have all the components of the newspaper. It is based on current events with games, pictures, recipes, and even jokes that the student love.

Unique Learning System Curriculum has standard-based curriculum for individuals with special needs. It collects data, has a large array of assessment tools, Addresses readiness skills and even has a new structure that supports adults moving into adult living.

SymbolStix ONLINE gives access to over 12,000 symbols. Keyword and Category search capabilities Weekly and monthly symbol updates at no charge.

Questions, Information about Equipment and Programs, Great Apps and information from "Closing the Gap" Send to: Suzanne Anderson
sbanderson@dsdmail.net
(801) 402-2209

We would like to share this information with other team members in the Newsletter.

Share a copy of the Newsletter with your Special Education Director, teachers and all team members. Watch the UAAACT Web page for announcements.