

UAAACT News

Utah Augmentative, Alternative, Assistive Communication
And Technology Teams

UAAACT Web Site: www.uaaact.org

March, 2011

Editor
Suzanne B. Anderson

The Computer
Center for Citizens
with Disabilities

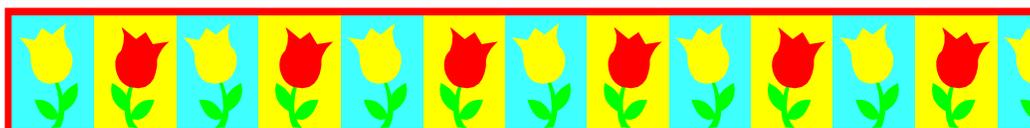
1595 West 500 South
Salt Lake City, Utah
(84101)

Phone: 801-887-9380
Toll Free:
888-866-5550

Craig Boogaard
Director
UAAACT
cboogaar@utah.gov

Scott Baggaley
Education Program
Specialist
sbaggaley@utah.gov

Lynn Marcoux
Secretary
lmarcoux@utah.gov



2011 UAAACT Conference

Congratulations to Craig, Scott, Lynn and the UAAACT Leadership Council for planning a very successful State UAAACT Conference. Everything was very well planned and enjoyed by those who attended the conference. It was exciting to have so many vendors that we could visit with and learn more about their products, equipments and programs. There was a large number of attendee's this year which makes all the efforts of planning worthwhile.

The Pre-conference with Pati King-Debaun, (who we all claim to be our own), was filled with terrific useable information. Her power-point presentation will be posted on the UAAACT Web page. We feasted on the information given by the Keynote Speakers: Gail Van Tatenhove and Dave Edyburn. Many of us attended their sessions during the day and felt that it was very worthwhile.

We congratulate Jocelyn Taylor on the completion of her doctoral program. Now she is Dr. Taylor – "Way to go, we are proud of you!!" We also continue to thank Jocelyn for her strong support of the UAAACT Project.

Mark your Calendars for Upcoming Events

April 7, 2011

1:00 – 3:00

Hands-On Training on Using Powerpoint in Special Education

by Alice Richins – Davis School District

To Register, email Lynn Marcoux: lmarcoux@utah.gov

April 14, 2011

1:00 – 3:00

File Maker Pro Upgrade

To Register, email Scott Baggaley: sbaggaley@utah.gov

June 11, 2011

UAAACT Team Summary Reports due – team leaders should email their report to: lescoen@ogdensd.org or mail to: Nadean Lescoe, Ogden City School District, 490 Gramercy Ave, Ogden, UT 84404. If you want to mail your report after May 26th, send it to Nadean's home address, 2990 South 1000 West, Nibley, Utah 84321. If you have questions for Nadean after May 26th, call her home phone at 435-752-5902.

June 11, 2011

Competency Forms due – send to Craig Boogaard

See additional information on page 4 & 5.

Forms can be found on the UAAACT Web page.

From Our Leader

AAC with an iPad or iPod

Proloquo2Go from Assistive Ware is a communication app that has been purchased for each UAAACT team. As a result, many UAAACT members are familiar with this full-featured communication solution. New AAC apps are being introduced which may also be helpful to your students. Based on the popularity of iPad sessions at the recent UAAACT Conference, I thought it might be helpful to add to the many discussions that were started at the conference. The following article will provide an introduction to some additional AAC apps for the iPad, iPod Touch and iPhone.

PredictAble (\$159.)

PredictAble is a text based AAC app developed by Therapy Box. It includes word prediction, a phrase bank, voice output and more. The following is written by Swapnil, the developer of PredictAble:

“PredictAble is a cost effective and unique communication aid solution for people with disabilities which result in speech impairments. Predictable may be a valuable communication aid for people with conditions such as: cerebral palsy, motor neuron disease and acquired brain injury. Users can type a message more efficiently by using a sophisticated word prediction engine and speak the message using a range of voices.

Features

Adjustable on-screen scanning to assist with selection. Multiple keyboard layouts, phrase bank for easy storage and retrieval of frequently used phrases with an ability to email messages directly from within the app. There is an ability to back up and retrieve vocabulary (phrase bank) on iPad or to user's computers for safe keeping. A choice of 9 voices, which can be customized to suit the users' needs. Easy access to recently used phrases and auditory feedback for predicted word options.

“PredictAble is a cool app designed to help people with communication disabilities to get

their message across efficiently. Predictable on an iPad is an innovative and socially acceptable communication aid solution!”

PredictAble has three access methods: Scan & Switch, Direct Touch, and Touch Anywhere. Those students who need switch access may also need RJ Cooper's iPad Switch Interface and iPad Super-Switch.

The link directly to iTunes is:

<http://itunes.apple.com/gb/app/predictable/id404445007?mt=8>

To contact the company regarding Predictable: support@tboxapps.com

TapSpeak Choice (\$99)

Ted Conley, the developer of TapSpeak Choice for iPad states: “TapSpeak Choice re-interprets low-to mid-tech communication for the iPad. It's a complete communication board editor and player that saves up to 75% of the set up time-over conventional devices and virtually eliminates maintenance time. Use the DynaVox/Mayer-Johnson PCS library, or your own photos or images, and geometric symbols for visual targets. You can record your own voice for playback (a set of sample libraries include a pre-recorded voice).

For those whose motor skill abilities make it necessary to use a switch, TapSpeak Choice support using the iPad screen as a switch for scanning and is the first app to use RJCooper's iPad Cordless Super-Switch and iPad Switch Interface for external switches. You can use one or two switches for auto scanning and step scan and choose among a complete array of scanning options.

Visit the website: www.TapSpeak.com to get the “Getting Started Guide” which will show you the basics of navigating boards and library layers, and building boards with libraries.



Continue: Tap Speak

Features include:

Drag and drop creation and editing of communication pages.

*Spend hours less time setting up pages so you can spend more time with your child or student.

*One to 56 messages on a board give you plenty of flexibility for different skill levels.

*Pre-populated libraries help you get started

*Message visual targets can be visually stimulating geometric symbols, photos, and included DynaVox/Mayer-Johnson PCS core library of 4500 symbols.

*Record your own voice or use the voice supplied with the sample libraries.

*Tap/touch configurable for a student's motor skill capability.

*Direct access and many scanning modes including two-switch scanning.

*Use the entire iPad screen as a switch or use RJ Cooper's iPad Super-Switch and iPad Switch interface. rj@cooper.com

*Sort and arrange boards and libraries in categories.

*Tap response is configurable to accommodate kids with varying motor skill leaves.

<http://itunes.apple.com/us/app/tapspeak-choice-for-ipad/id408507581?mt=8#>

Expressive (\$34.99)

According to the company web site:

“Expressive developed in order to improve the communication abilities of individuals with a communication disorder. It does not matter if an individual is having difficulty communicating due to autism, apraxia, or any other communication disorder. Expressive will give that person the ability to express themselves through the use of pictured images and corresponding audio.

The best thing about Expressive is its ease of use. It does not require any knowledge about programming or manuals; Expressive is intuitive and simple to use. Flexible and intuitive customization within Expressive allows users to select from a pool of images with audio files, create their own folders and arrange the images as they please. If you have a family member that has lost the ability to express themselves (even if just temporarily due to a surgery, accident or aphasia) Expressive will give them back the ability to communicate and express their needs

Expressive website:

<http://smartyears.net/?p=201>

Grace (\$37.99)

Another alternative is Grace. This is another symbols based AAC app. It won't be as comprehensive or polished as something like Proloquo2go, but it might be an affordable starting place.

<http://itunes.apple.com/us/app/grace-picture-exchange-for/id360574688?mt=8>

iConverse (\$9.99)

iConverse is a simple communication app for individuals who need 6 or few messages.

<http://itunes.apple.com/us/app/iconverse-assisted-communication/id304852637?mt=8>

As new apps come along or as existing apps add features and make updates, there will continue to be a stream of AAC products that have the potential to enhance the communication skills of our students. Our goal is to help you be aware of the options so you can introduce affordable AAC products to your students.

- Craig -

iConverse



Expressive



Questions and Answers

Discussion Column

Question:

Since our team gets our own budget from the state, we could use it to cover a device for a student on a 504 plan and not stress out my director! Correct?

Answer:

Yes, you can use your team equipment budget to support the AT needs of any student in your district. The UAAACT team equipment is seen primarily as assessment equipment. But if you choose to allow a student to use the equipment on a long-term basis, that is perfectly ok.

Question:

What is the UAAACT role with evaluating students on a 504 plan?

Answer:

UAAACT teams can evaluate any student who is referred for an evaluation. They do NOT need to be in a special education program to receive an evaluation by the UAAACT Team.

Some districts handle AT for 504 students in almost the same way they deal with AT for students in special education. A 504 student may require AT as a reasonable accommodation. A special education student may need the AT to make reasonable progress toward the goals on their IEP. Although the funds to purchase AT for the 504 student may be from a different source (504 Funds) than the student in Special Education, the school district may still be the funding source for both students. See information below from the web site of “The Family Center on Technology and Disability”. <http://www.fctd.info/>

“Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act is a federal civil rights law that prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities. Section 504 affects all programs that receive federal funds, including public schools. The law states that students with disabilities must be given the same opportunities to participate in educational programs and activities as students without disabilities, and the use of assistive technology

may be considered as an accommodation. Therefore, even if a child does not meet special education criteria, it is sometimes possible to acquire needed devices through a 504 Plan. For example, a student with poor handwriting due to impaired fine motor skills may be given access to a computer to complete written assignments. Section 504 does not require school districts to develop an IEP for students. However, the district should document in a written 504 Plan what evaluations were performed and what decisions were made regarding the student.”

Source:

<http://www.fctd.info/resources/fig/Print/Sec2.pdf>

Craig Boogaard

End of the Year Reporting

Important Information

The **number of students** that your team has served, the **total numbers of UAAACT hours** , and the number of **UAAACT equipment items provided** to students, parents and IEP teams, need to be compiled and sent to Nadean Lescoe.

Email to :

lescoen@ogdensd.org

or mail to:

Nadean Lescoe

Ogden City School District

490 Gramercy Ave

Ogden, UT 84404

If you want to mail your report after May 26th- send the reports to Nadean’s home address. Nadean Lescoe

2990 South 1000 West

Nibley, Utah 84321

If you have questions for Nadean after May 26th, call her home phone at: 435-752-5902

** If your report is **NOT** received by **June 15th** your team hours and number of students will be recorded as zero and your equipment budget for the 2011-12 school year will be calculated accordingly.

Team Member Competency Level

(forms can be found on the web site)

Check the competency levels for your team members then send this information to Craig by **June 11, 2011**. Forms can be emailed to cbooggar@utah.gov

They can also be faxed to Craig at:

801-887-9382

(or) mail to:

Craig Boogaard

The Computer Center for Citizens With Disabilities at UCAT
1595 West 500 South
Salt Lake City, UT 84104

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 Aple 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/>

Looking for Participants

Rebecca Mullican, a doctoral candidate at the University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg, MS, and a fellow LAMP Workshop attendee, is looking for participants for a research project she is initiating. (Craig has a letter that outlines the requirements for her study, if you are interested.)

We would also welcome you to forward this message on to any other potential candidates for this research. She is looking for about 15-20 volunteers, and additional questions and information may be directed to her, at the following contact information.

Rebecca Mullican

18 College Dr. #5057

Hattiesburg, MS 39406

Email: dr.rmullican@gmail.com

We appreciate your support of such research projects, as we all continue on this journey together. To show our gratitude, we will offer a free "Autism Tomorrow" book, to the first 20 candidates that agree to participate in this study.

Sincerely,

Courtney Drown

LAMP Program Operations Coordinator
The Center for AAC and Autism
P.O Box 1317
Wooster, OH 44691
Phone: (866) 998-1726
FX: (330) 263-4829
www.aacandautism.com

Suggestion:

RJ Cooper sends information out via e-mail that is very informative about his and other products. It is also often very humorous. rj@cooper.com
This is from his latest e-mail:

RadSounds

"This is the ultimate cause/effect music player! He says that it works with his iPad Switch Interface and iPad Super-Switch. Use the packaged songs or bring your own in from iTunes/iPad library or record your own."

Thanks to RJ Cooper for coming to our conference and presenting a wonderful break-out session.

2011 UAAACT Conference Re-cap

Our recent conference provided some exceptional information about the latest devices, strategies, and ideas that can be used to serve our students who require some time with assistive technology intervention. A broad range of both high tech and low tech strategies were presented to assist our students in being able to more successfully access their environment as well as the general curriculum. We were given a great opportunity to visit with some great vendors who are ready and willing to do what they can to help us access the optimum devices and software for our students. Here is a summary of some key points presented by our keynote speakers, as well as some of the items presented at breakout sessions.

Gail Van Tatenhove was a very dynamic speaker who provided us with some pertinent information about core vocabulary. It was interesting to note that many of us realized that most of our programming of devices is with nouns. She pointed out that during the course of our everyday conversations the use of nouns is four to one with other types of words. We need to design our materials to have more core vocabulary on devices and language boards to be used by our students.

Dave Edyburn's presentation was both depressing and thought provoking. As funding becomes more difficult to obtain, we will all have to find ways to prove that assistive technology devices and software is necessary for many of our students to be able to successfully access the curriculum. This will involve being an active participant in studies that prove assistive technology does make it possible for our students to achieve academic success.

Jay Wheeler's presentation on Sensory Integration was excellent. He provided lots of ideas on assisting our students in developing a "sensory diet" to help them acclimate to their environment. He helped to clarify a lot of information about sensory difficulties that students are having.

Enid Hurtado from Mayer-Johnson enthused the group with the introduction of new products. The versatility of the software truly lends itself to creating custom instructional activities. The session was only long enough to whet our appetites for new options available.

Tanya Rose Curtis and Nicole Ruschell presented "Choosing AAC: Easy to use, write with Symbols, or Professional grade? They presented information about Words+.

Val Stilwell presented "Cognitive Curbcuts with Picture Planner 3.0 on the iPad and iPod Touch. This was an effective demonstration of an application that has been especially helpful with people with autism. The app continues to evolve; now in its third generation, the app can be used with multiple people and can be used to coordinate their activities. The company allows a free trial for 30 days.

Kevin John and Kent Remund gave a fun presentation "At Solutions – Macgyver Style" This was an enjoyable orientation to what Kevin and Kent do at UCAT. Their presentation included a broad range of the solutions they develop for clients with unique needs. The examples they brought along were excellent. They explained the materials that are most useful and available.

Jim West and Ross Fishburn presented the latest games designed by Ross. His games cover a wide variety of areas from Touch Math to single switch games. These games provide some valuable practice for students to learn new concepts. These are great for all levels.

A presentation was given by **Christine Jones** on digital books. She provided us with information about how students can qualify for this service. She gave us information on how a person can register for Bookshare, and what types of books are available. She also reviewed information about who is eligible for this service.

There were a number of excellent presentations on iPad and iPod use and apps that can be used. Everyone was really excited to get more information about our newest technology.

Continued from page 6

Building Blocks for Successful Teaching was presented by Susan Hamblin and Suzanne Anderson (Davis School District). This presentation covered effective ways to teach a group of students with a variety of disabilities and a variety of AT users all in the same group. The trick is to choose a topic and then begin to build and expand from there using functional materials and lots of repetition.

Janalyn Biesinger and Jennifer Hutchinson from Granite School District presented “**Freshen Up Your PECS**”. They provided us with new activities and ideas to keep your Picture Exchange Communication System updated with fresh new ideas.

Dave Lambert, (Washington County Schools) used his humor and ideas to share with us the “**Top Ten Myths of Augmentative Communication**” It is great to get free materials and learn how to debunk myths of the trade. Way to go Dave!

“**Boardmaker and Beyond**”, presented by: Nadean Lescoe, Doris Jung, Sharon Cervantes and Karen Ulrich from Ogden, showed the newest Boardmaker software family, PCS Animations and Beyond Boardmaker. They demonstrated how this software can turn your computer into a dynamic communication device and tools to help with the creation of other therapy materials.

We are very lucky to have so many team members from all over the state that can share new and interesting techniques and materials. We appreciate all those that spent the many hours it takes to prepare for a presentation.



Pre-Conference Pati King-DeBaun

The preconference was very well attended and received by the UAAACT Team members. Pati gave lots of excellent information to us. Below are some of the highlights of her presentation. The power point notes are posted on the UAAACT Web page.

Building a Foundation for Communication Competence.

- **Teach Social Skills**: A collection of phrases that can be retrieved easily and provide efficient methods for students to have a conversation, participate in a discussion, provide feedback to the listener, meet personal needs, establish relationships, etc.
- **Teach Literacy Skills**: Teach core words that are selected for their strong literacy and communicative base. Students learn how to identify those words read them and use them to spell other words.
- **Teach Linguistic Skills**: Students learn how to use core words and vocabulary lists to build sentences and generate ideas. Students can learn the use of lists to generate ideas.

Have conversations with your students. Teach them how to have conversations, most haven't been involved before. Engage in social conversations.

“The ability to participate in social conversation affects not only the individual's perception of themselves as effective communicators; it affects the willingness of communication partners to engage AAC communicators in conversation.

Starting with Hello

Hello conversations are the easiest for students to participate in at any level. Students learn conversational turn-taking at the beginning level. Students learn that conversations include a beginning, middle, and end at the transitional level. It is something they do everyday and can do multiple times per day.

Next students participate in a talking interactive script for the target conversation. These activities are called **Learn it !** Activities. Students should practice with the support of the instructor.

Check out websites:

pati@creativecommunicating.com

www.eduworkshops.com www.adaptedstories.com

How to use the *Handbook of Special Education Technology Research and Practice*

By: Britta Scullion
UAAACT Leadership Council Member

Many of you saw Dave Edyburn speak at the UAAACT conference. He is one of the editors of the book that was given to each team at the conference entitled, “*Handbook of Special Education Technology Research and Practice*”. As Dave pointed out in his opening keynote address, most of us do not think about research as an exciting topic. I must admit, I was not really looking forward to cracking this five-pound book open instead of playing with the newest gadgets from the conference. However, as we know, the current education climate is focused on evidenced-based practice. Districts and funding sources are asking us to focus on accountability and specific gains in student achievement based on specific interventions. When writing grants, we are often asked to cite research to provide justification that technology will help our students improve their academic outcomes. This book provides up-to-date information regarding research-related projects around the world, and contains collections of works by top professionals in the field. It also includes a history of technology use in special education, as well as a history of legislative mandates. Knowing this history helps us protect the rights of individuals with disabilities during times of funding cutbacks.

The book is organized into 41 chapters in 8 sections, including sections on assistive technology in the schools, disability specific technology, and technology in specific instructional contexts. This book is a great resource to have at your finger tips, and much easier than wading through the vast amounts of poor quality research or non-applicable studies found through on-line searches or non-specific educational or medical references.

The following is an example of one way I found this book useful. This year, my team has had increased UAAACT referrals to address the needs of students with learning disabilities in inclusive classrooms. I believe strategies such as word processing programs, screen readers, and word prediction can help these students, but I myself have never read any research to back this up and would be unable to come up with anything if I needed to justify the effectiveness for a grant or to cite evidenced based studies to an administrator. I looked in the table of contents of the “Handbook”, and found an article in the “disability specific” section of the book titled, “Classroom Technology for Students with Learning Disabilities” by Rena B. Lewis. In this article, I found research that showed that word processing programs and tools were shown to improve aspects of written language performance in students with disabilities. Some specific outcomes included:

- Word prediction was the most promising strategy for improving text entry speed in students with disabilities when moving from writing by hand to typing. Within 20 weeks, students had achieved 82% of their handwriting speed, while improving their the appearance, legibility, and spelling accuracy of their work
- The study also reported that spell checkers appear to be effective for editing tools for students with learning disabilities while grammar checkers are generally not.
- This study also found that word prediction with synthesized speech did not significantly help either elementary or secondary students with learning disabilities compared to word prediction without speech.

The article included a summary of tentative recommendations based on the research results as well as recommendations for selection of reading instruction software. Overall, I think that having this book, as a source for research-based articles supporting our field will be a useful resource for every team.

iPad Updates and Other Ideas

By: Scott Baggaley
iPad Apps and Notes

Proloquo2go: There have now been 5 free updates to Proloquo2go. Yes, these updates have been to fix some bugs in the programming, but they have also been to add additional features. Some of these are:

- Improved Vocabulary Backup to and from computer using either Wifi or through iTunes and your connecting cable.
- Higher Quality Voices.
- Supported use of Apple's Voiceover.
- Larger item sizes (1 or 2 items on iPad screen).
- Word Prediction in the keyboard view.
- Projecting off of a VGA Projector.

Another issue that has come up with Proloquo2go is the change in licensure. When we originally purchased and loaded Proloquo2go there was not a system in place for organizations to manage multiple licenses, and it was impossible to purchase an app more than once. This has been changed. You can still only purchase an app once on an iTunes account, but there is now a volume purchasing program designed to let organizations such as school districts, and State agencies purchase multiple use licenses. According to the Proloquo2go website one license allows a single user to have the app on multiple devices, but this is limited to only one person using multiple devices. Educational organizations need to have 1 license for each user (student) using the app at a time. For UAAACT Teams the project will purchase an additional licenses for your team (this may not be enough for the number of devices that you are using). Additional licences may be purchased with team money. The nice thing about this purchasing program is that when we purchase more than 20 of most applications, we can get them for almost 50% of the normal purchase price. For more information on the Volume purchase program see: www.apple.com/itunes/education/.

iPad Operating system: There has been an update to the iPad operating system. This actually corresponded with the release of the iPhone 4, and many of you may have already updated without knowing what new features are available to you. For more information on this see: www.apple.com/ios.

Moms with Apps: This is a group that has a weekly app blog. They promote different family friendly apps or school friendly apps. They even include a section just for special needs. Here UAAACT Teams may find a variety of apps that may apply to different challenges. The moms with apps page is located at: <http://momswithapps.com>.

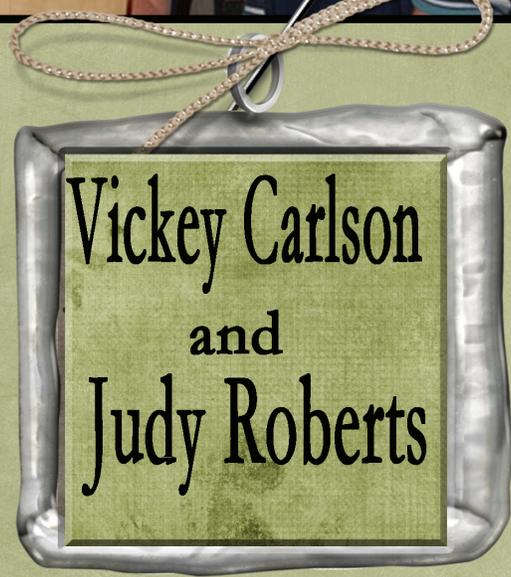
Distinguished Service Award



Sue Lancaster



**Ken Reavis
Award**
Presented to:



**Vickey Carlson
and
Judy Roberts**



UAAACT State Conference 2011



UAAACT Luncheon



Craig's chance to listen
to the speaker



Keynote Speaker
Dave Edyburn



Conference attendance was good.

(left to right)



Craig Boogaard(UCAT), Judy Olsen(Price), Nadean Lescoe (Ogden)
Jocelyn Taylor (USOE), Julia Parslow (Sevier), Judy Roberts (Jordyn)
Britta Scullion (Canyons)