

# contAACT

ISSUE 1, SPRING 2009



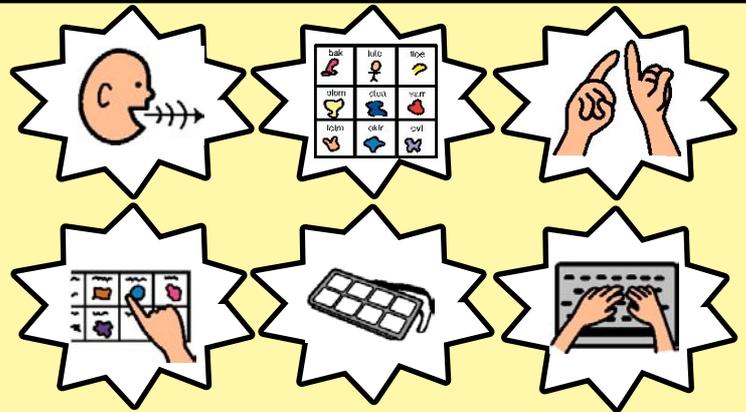
Lots to discuss...



People in power need to see communication aids being used!



Nanette Milne used a DynaVox V Max when she told the Scottish Parliament about the need to improve services for AAC users.



## Make Your Voice Heard!

Welcome to Augmentative Communication in Practice's first newsletter for people who use AAC. Lots of people have come to AAC meetings over the past year. We have talked about how people get funding, information and support for their communication aids. We want to thank you for telling us about how hard it was to get your communication aid and about how important it is to you. So far your group doesn't have a name! Please send in ideas and we will give a prize for the winning entry! [enquiries@acipscotland.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@acipscotland.org.uk)

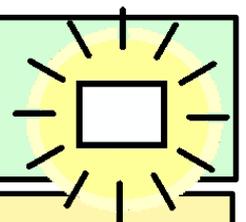
In May 2008, Nanette Milne MSP told the Scottish Parliament about people who use communication aids and the need to make it easier for people to get help with their devices.

The Government has now set up a Working Group to look at services for people who use AAC in Scotland. They are trying to find ways to make it easier for people who need communication aids to get the devices and support they need. The group will report back to the Government early this year.

CONTACT ISSUE 2 WILL BE OUT AUTUMN 2009!



# What's New?



## FOCUS ON... HANDHELD COMMUNICATION AIDS

Some communication aids seem big and heavy but there are smaller devices called 'handhelds' or 'handheld devices' available. This technology changes quickly so it is hard to keep up with what's around.

Really, you need to see them and try them out. Ask your Speech and Language Therapist, your local AAC service, or SCTCI or CALL what they know and what they can show or lend you. They can also give you honest advice. You can maybe ask the supplier to visit and show you their latest handheld. They can demonstrate and explain their own device very well - but remember, their job is to sell you THEIR device, so they will always make it seem like the best one.

You need to think about:

- 1) Size and shape/weight - screen and device overall (Would it fit in your pocket? Your handbag? On a neck strap? Can you SEE the screen or is it TOO tiny?)
- 2) Voice & volume (Would it be heard in a classroom or pub? Does it have a good choice of voices? American/British?)
- 3) Access (Does it work with switches or only for someone who can touch the screen?)
- 4) Simplicity (Do you need a university degree in engineering to learn to work it? Can you use it when it's in its case on the bus?)
- 5) Robustness / reliability (What happens if you drop it? Has it got a case?)

### Chat-PC 4

Weight: 538g, screen: 3.5"

Liked: Wheelchair mounting, stand, loud

Didn't like: Not very portable, heavy

[www.pri-liberator.com](http://www.pri-liberator.com)



### Dynavox Palmtop 3

Weight: 400g, screen: 3.75"

Liked: Strong, loud, big screen, has stand

Didn't like: Not very portable, heavy

[www.dynavox.co.uk](http://www.dynavox.co.uk)



### Say It Sam 2

Weight: 397g

Liked: Very loud, colour options, looks cool

Didn't like: Not very portable, no case

[www.possum.co.uk](http://www.possum.co.uk)



### Chat-PC Silk

Weight: 355g

Liked: Light with rubber case

Didn't like: Too bulky for pocket

[www.pri-liberator.com](http://www.pri-liberator.com)



### Possum Jive

Weight: 350g

Liked: Light, innovative, customised versions, looks smart

Didn't like: Very new, so untried

[www.possum.co.uk](http://www.possum.co.uk)



### Tellus Smart

Weight: 320g

Liked: Easy to use, light, colour options

Didn't like: Not very loud

[www.techcess.co.uk](http://www.techcess.co.uk)



WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE US TO FOCUS ON NEXT ISSUE? EMAIL US AT [enquiries@acipscotland.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@acipscotland.org.uk) TO TELL US!

# Fun and Games



Switch accessible games from [www.oneswitch.org.uk](http://www.oneswitch.org.uk)

This website has lots of free switch accessible games. There are adventure, arcade, platform, puzzle, race, shooting and sport games and they all tell you how to play and what skills you need.

We had a problem getting around some of the site and some of the games did not work because they had the wrong link when we tried to download them. Only a few work on a Mac. We had fun with the games we did play though.

## We liked



### PC ONLY - JUMPFROG



We found it hard to stop playing Jumpfrog! You try to make your frog jump onto moving platforms by hitting a switch at the right time. You need to have good timing skills and we didn't do very well as our frog kept falling off the edges! In the harder levels, the platform disappears if you wait too long. This happened to us a lot!

## We didn't like



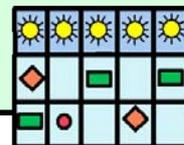
### PC/MAC - ARCHAIST



There are lots of ways to play this game and control your robot. In the basic game you move the robot around obstacles and shoot enemies by hitting a switch. We found it very hard to control and kept blowing up! It looks nice though. Maybe it was just too hard for us but you might do better!

**HAVE YOU TRIED THESE OR ANY OTHER GAMES? LET US KNOW AND WE'LL TELL PEOPLE WHAT YOU THINK IN THE NEXT ISSUE! EMAIL US AT: [enquiries@acipscotland.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@acipscotland.org.uk)**

# In the Diary



## FAMILY FUN TECHNOLOGY DAY - AT CALL SCOTLAND, 25 APRIL 2009

- \* For children who use AAC or have additional support needs
- \* And their friends, brothers and sisters
- \* Oh... and their parents!
- \* Try out switches, toys, computers, software and communication aids
- \* Ride the Smart Wheelchair
- \* Play games and win prizes
- \* It's free, and food and drink is provided!



To book a place, call us on 0131 651 6235 or email [info@callscotland.org.uk](mailto:info@callscotland.org.uk)

# Places We Like



## Things to do in Glasgow!



- \* Go shopping at Buchanan Street Galleries  
Buchanan Street, Glasgow G1 2FF  
Level street access, bright, accessible toilets, no fixed chairs in food court
- \* See a film at Cineworld  
7 Renfrew Street, Glasgow, G2 3AB  
Wheelchair spaces, accessible toilets, hearing system, assistance dogs allowed
- \* Eat at The Arches  
253 Argyle Street, Glasgow G2 8DL  
Large print menus available, space for wheelchairs, accessible toilets

# Your Local ACiP:S Contact

AAC Resource, Ayrshire Central Hospital, Kilwinning Road, Irvine, Ayrshire, KA12 8SS  
Tel: 01294 323528 Email: [linda.page@aapct.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:linda.page@aapct.scot.nhs.uk)

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