



International Society For
Augmentative And Alternative Communication

INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR AUGMENTATIVE AND ALTERNATIVE COMMUNICATION

ISAAC INDIA

Newsletter

2024- ISSUE 1 APRIL 2024

VISION

AAC will be
recognized, valued and
used throughout the
world

MISSION

To promote the best
possible
Communication for
people with complex
communication need



International Society For
Augmentative And Alternative Communication

In this newsletter you will find:

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From the Desk of ISAAC



ISAAC – India President

As President of ISAAC India Chapter, it is indeed a proud moment, that an exclusive newsletter spreading awareness about AAC is being published for the first time in India .It's a great honor to be part of the team ISAAC INDIA Chapter which relentlessly works for promoting AAC. This newsletter intends to spread the knowledge about AAC and bring together the expert resources in our country. This online newsletter would fill in the gaps existing at grass root level by making available the knowledge at the tap of a button.

Best wishes to the publishing team for achieving this humongous task .

***Regards
Bhavna***

From the Desk of ISAAC



Patron of ISAAC India Chapter and former President of ISAAC

Many congratulations to the ISAAC INDIA CHAPTER for launching its Newsletter. Isaac India has been a vibrant organisation for many years. This newsletter is an excellent way to share news and raise awareness about what is happening in the field of AAC in India. There are a wealth of indigenous low tech and high-tech devices being developed in the country and Indian picture symbols that are culturally and linguistically relevant to AAC users in different parts of India. Access to this information will help both professionals and others, to embark on an exciting journey of providing relevant and accessible AAC “tools that speak volumes”!! We also have some really dynamic AAC Leaders, like Bhavna Botta, amongst others, who have made such an impact in this field. The Newsletter will be a great platform for all of us to learn from them.

All my good wishes to the Team!

Sudha Kaul

IICP



A BRIEF ON THE ISAAC INDIA CHAPTER CONFERENCE HELD IN JAN 2024

*Theme: 'Bridging the Gap: Empowering
Diverse Communicators with Recent
Trends in AAC'*

The Centre for AAC & Sign Language, Centre of Excellence, All India Institute of Speech & Hearing, Mysore in collaboration with ISSAC, India Chapter conducted a two-day Rehabilitation Council of India (RCI) accredited National Continuing Rehabilitation Education (CRE) Conference on the theme 'Bridging the Gap: Empowering Diverse Communicators with Recent Trends in AAC' on 11th and 12th January, 2024. Over 130 participants had registered for the conference from various states such as Delhi, Gujarat, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Kerala. The highlight of the conference was the participation of neurodiverse individuals, caregivers, assistive technology specialists, special educators, social workers, speech-language pathologists, audiologists and post graduate students of speech-language pathology, representative enhances communication and language development's from AAC industry and representatives from NGOs. Thanks to the access features of the venue and Guest House arrangements for staying.



A BRIEF ON THE ISAAC INDIA CHAPTER CONFERENCE HELD IN JAN 2024

*Theme: 'Bridging the Gap: Empowering
Diverse Communicators with Recent
Trends in AAC'*

The conference commenced on 11th January, 2024 with the inauguration. Padmashree Dr. Sudha Kaul, former President of ISAAC and Patron of the ISAAC India Chapter was the Chief Guest. In the address by the chief guest, Dr Kaul emphasized the role of Augmentative and Alternative Communication in enhancing better quality of life of persons with disabilities. Mr. David Goldberg, Assistive Technology Specialist from New Jersey, USA was the guest of honour. Mr Goldberg gave an overview regarding NIKA project and how the project is helping people from developing countries in getting access to various high tech AAC devices. Ms. Bhavna Botta, President of ISAAC India chapter delivered the Presidential address. E-proceedings containing the full-length articles of the scientific sessions was also released during the event.



A BRIEF ON THE ISAAC INDIA CHAPTER CONFERENCE HELD IN JAN 2024

*Theme: 'Bridging the Gap: Empowering
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Trends in AAC'*

The two days Conference dealt with themes such as impact of AAC on beneficiaries and caregivers, advanced AAC devices & modalities, challenges in using AAC and more. The theme based sessions also had invited keynote talks by Ms. Bhavna Botta, President ISAAC about 'My Journey with AAC' where Ms. Botta used Aditi - foot switch paired with an AAC device for her presentation; 'Case Studies on Recent Advancements in Eye-Tracking Technology' by Mr. David Goldberg; 'Cortical Visual Impairment (CVI) and AAC' by Dr. Vicki R. Casella, Executive Director, The Bridge School, California; 'Efficacy of AAC Intervention in Persons with Aphasia' by Dr. Rajinder Koul, Department Chair & Professor, Department of Speech Language and Chair & Professor, Department of Speech Language and Hearing Sciences, Moody College of Communication, University of Texas, Austin; 'AAC & its Technology in Developing Countries' by Dr. Sudha Kaul, Founder, Indian Institute of Cerebral Palsy (IICP), Kolkata. Industry presentations included 3 Indian industries viz., Avaz - Inventions Lab, Deep Vision Tech Pvt. Ltd., Bangalore and NerdNerdy, Gurugram.



A BRIEF ON THE ISAAC INDIA CHAPTER CONFERENCE HELD IN JAN 2024

*Theme: 'Bridging the Gap: Empowering
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The highlight of the entire conference was the thoughtfully curated and practically discussed panel on the theme 'Challenges Towards Effective Use of AAC in India' moderated by Prof. Rangasayee R, Former Director, AYJNISHD, Mumbai. The panel included representation from all the stakeholders - Ms. Bhavna Botta (AAC user), Ms. Sweta Kedia (mother of AAC user), Ms. Madumita Dasgupta (Special Educator), Dr. Vineetha Sara Philip (Speech Language Pathologist) and Mrs. Lalitha Nagarajan (AAC manufacturer) served as the panellists. Various topics like problems faced by AAC users, special educators, speech language pathologists, AAC users, parents etc. were discussed. The panel consolidated few of the problem statements and listed ways to resolve.

Session also actively involved users and family members as presenters and during discussion. Participants had a conducted tour of the Centre for AAC & Sign Language, Centre of Excellence, AIISH, Mysore and Department of Special Education, AIISH, Mysore. Awards for session-wise best paper, appreciations to various teams who worked diligently for the conference were delivered. Prof. M. Pushpavathi, the Director of AIISH and other senior dignitaries joined the valedictory event.

Inauguration and Mr. David Goldberg's with his Key Note Address



Orientation about Center for AAC and Department of Special Education for the dignitaries



Scientific Sessions and Panel discussion



CONFERENCE AND WEBINAR DETAILS

Some recommendations of the Conference include

- 1.Capacity building for Shadow teachers and support teachers to address SEN
2. Increasing patience on the part of listeners and their attitude towards AAC users
- 3.Exam time to be extended till AAC users complete all questions and clear guidelines to be given to all exam boards.
- 4.Indicating need for Culturally appropriate pics and languages in commercial devices
- 5.SLP program to include Communication too and be renamed as SLCP.
- 6.Creating awareness and attitude towards use of AAC among general public, interdisciplinary professionals and families
- 7.Making web contents accessible for AAC users

SOME RESEARCH WORK DONE IN INDIA

Kasturba medical college

- Devadiga DN, Varghese AL, & Bhat JS, (2014) Epidemiology of communication disorders and its role in rehabilitation, international journal of innovative research & development, 3 (3). Pp. 469-473. ISSN 2278-0211
- Perspective of speech language pathologist on alternative and augmentative communication devices : a qualitative research (2018)

SRIHER (DU)

- Ashmitha A & Krupa M (2019). Effectiveness of sensitization programme about augmentative and alternative communication in parents of children with communication disorders
- Linda P & Krupa M (2019). Effectiveness of sensitisation programme about AAC in special educators

National Institute of Speech and Hearing (NISH)

- Vinitha Mary George (2010) efficiency of alternative and augmentative communication (AAC) intervention for children with cerebral palsy
- Suja kunnath, Lakshmi S Mohan, Sajan sam Varghese (2015) awareness, attitude and experience of school educators' inclusive education of children with autism spectrum disorder

SOME RESEARCH WORK DONE IN INDIA

All India Institute of Speech and Hearing (AIISH)

- Swathi (2022) parents' acceptance, experience, challenges and expectancy factors of AAC intervention for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Kale, Ankita, Deepak kumar (2022) development and validation of visual scene image dataset for Indian AAC users
- Bhavani Venkatachalam (2022) Comparative study between grid-based and visual scene display based AAC systems in children with cerebral palsy
- Delvin Devassia (2022) development and validation of online based flip book on childhood communication disorders in malyalam for school teachers
- Vineetha Sara Philip (2022) Symbolic language abilities for aided communication in persons with aphasia

PUZZLE TIME



DECODE A FACT ON AAC

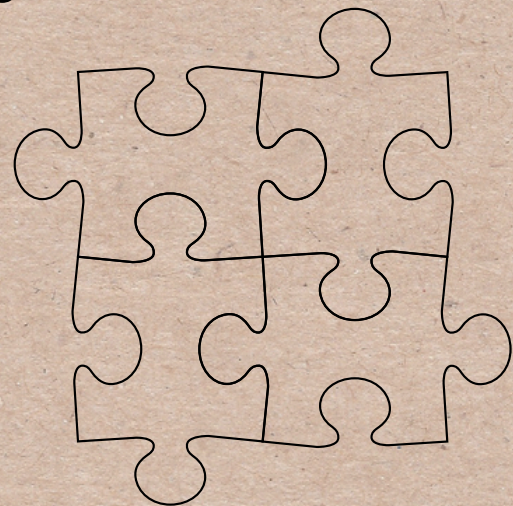
OOU VENOEUVZ UIGGWERUOARIE

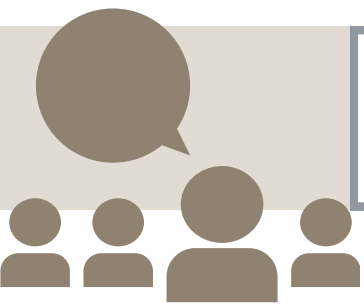
OEK BOELWOLV K VXVBIMGVEA

Clue: V is equal to E

Instructions:

Decode the message. Each letter in the phrase has been replaced with a random letter or number. Try to decode the message.

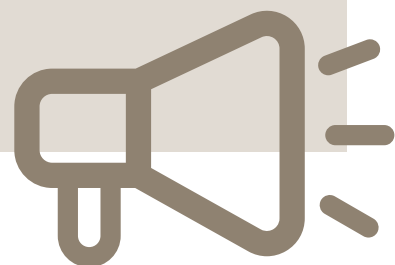




VOICES FROM USER'S FAMILY

“Mridul came into our lives in 2008. It was a magical happy moment! He had a febrile convulsion during his 5th month. Our whole world tossed to the reality of his diagnosis. We understood that he is a Kernicterus baby affected with severe motor development challenges. Mridul gave me a new confidence to overcome this. It was difficult yet interesting. His father and I supported by my entire family took up this challenge of destiny as a blessing in disguise. Our business, relationship, bonding and outlook towards his diagnosis and treatment grew with his age and continues to do so. After the struggle of 4 years in Mumbai seeking a therapy for him, when we returned back to Kolkata, Mridul was 5. We approached IICP as our last hope for our son. IICP filled my heart with faith and belief that Mridul can actually live a quality life of self determination.

Mridul and because of him, I saw how AAC was introduced to him at a tender age and how liberating it was for my son to enjoy learning both academics and play. He learnt to use switches to play, then theme based picture-text communication boards and finally the alphabet board. He learnt to use his own communication board to prepare for his school interview and he used it successfully to answer questions addressed to him. He was introduced to the keyboard very early so that he could participate in the classroom functionally with his writing peers.

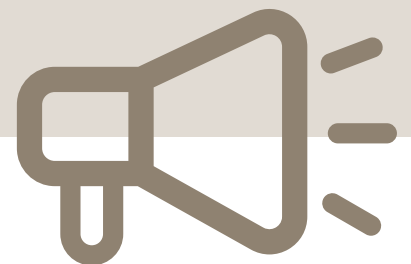




VOICES FROM USER'S FAMILY

A vast world now opened up for Mridul and us. He got admission in the inclusive school, AKSHAR with the teachers there, Computer teacher at home and the trainers of IICP collaborating such that Mridul was truly included in every aspect of his schooling. He switches spontaneously between using gestures, facial expressions, body language and augments it with assistive devices to emphatically get his point across. AAC has elicited his sparky, spunky nature as he jokes and chats with his friends, communicate with strangers he meets in his travels with family nationally and internationally. He is a student of class 9 following the mainstream curriculum. He is preparing for his board examination in 2025 with AAC support. Mridul will share with you some of his choicest experiences and achievements himself”.

Shwetha Kedia
M/o. Mridul Kedia



COMIC TIME

AAC – YOUR FRIEND



Courtesy: www.pixton.com



ABOUT ISAAC INDIA CHAPTER & IT'S MEMBERSHIP



The International Society for Augmentative and Alternative Communication (ISAAC) works to improve the lives of children and adults who use AAC. 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.

In April 2008, ISAAC India chapter was registered formally under societies registration Act (1860) of India. ISAAC India chapter helps to create awareness, training, research and development of indigenous aids and advocacy.

HOW TO BECOME ISAAC INDIA CHAPTER MEMBER

ITEM	PRICE
Professional	Rs. 2,500
People who use AAC and their families	Rs. 950
Student	Rs. 1,500
Institutional	Rs. 11,500
Corporate	Rs. 48,500
Retired	Rs. 1,500

For details, please contact

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ISAAC INDIA CHAPTER OFFICE BEARERS

President	- Ms. Bhavana Botta (botta.bhavna@gmail.com)
Vice president	- Ms. Rajul Padmanabhan (rajulpadmanabhan@hotmail.com)
Secretary	- Dr. Vineetha Sara Philip (secretaryisaacindia@gmail.com)
Joint secretary	- Ms. Swati Chakraborty (swati.c28@gmail.com)
Treasurer	- Ms. Sangeetha G S (sangeetha@nish.ac.in)
Patrons	- Dr. Sudha Kaul (sudha.kaul@gmail.com) - Prof. Rangasayee (rangasayee2002@yahoo.co.in)
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ISAAC INDIA SUBCOMMITTEES & IN- CHARGES

Webinar and Training Committee

Headed by Dr. Usha Dalvi, supported by Ms Manavi Jalan.

Website and Social media committee

Headed by Ms Bhavana Botta

Newsletter

Headed by Prof. Rangasayee, Dr. Krupa M. and Dr. Amulya P. Rao

Conference Committee

Headed by Dr. Ajish Abraham



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