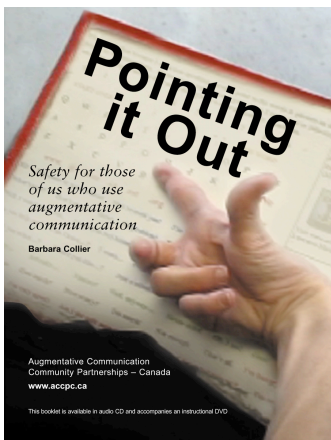


# Augmentative Communication Community Partnerships-Canada

As we come to the end of another year, we would like to share some ACCPC highlights from 2007. We invite you to visit our website at [www.accpc.ca](http://www.accpc.ca) for more details and we always welcome your calls and emails. Many thanks to those of you who have partnered with us on projects and who have written support letters for us over the past year. As most of you know, ACCPC has no core funding and we work to secure funding on a project to project basis.

## ACCPC Projects in 2007



ACCPC developed a DVD and booklet about abuse prevention for youth and adults who use AAC. Adults who use AAC shared their recommendations on safety. Contributors included Aaron Shelbourne, Darlene Jelenic, Ron Sturby, Tony Diamanti, Jason Masters, Ronnie Carrie, Natalie Lefebvre and Anne Abbott.

Pointing it Out is primarily intended for adults and youth who use AAC. It is also useful for families, teachers, clinicians, counselors, attendants, health care providers, legal professionals, police and others who work in community services.

Jolene Casella organized the launch events in Hamilton, Toronto and Sudbury. Partner agencies included March of Dimes and I-CAN Independence Centre and Network, Sudbury. Over 120 people attended these events and received free copies of the resource. Check photos at <http://www.accpc.ca/pio-launchevents.htm>

*"Pointing it Out makes a significant contribution to the field of AAC by touching upon issues that are universal and uphold the principles mentioned in the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. It will be of great value to members of the AAC community, worldwide."*

Sudha Kaul, Ph.D., President, ISAAC. NGO with special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations.



**At the Toronto Launch: Tony Diamanti, Vincent Conville (OTF), Pippa Wennberg, Barbara Collier, Aaron Shelbourne, Linda Briggs (OTF), Lamia Gibson, Marsha Brown and Anne Abbott.**

We are grateful to The Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) for funding this important project.

To order your copy of Pointing it Out, download an order form from [www.accpc.ca](http://www.accpc.ca)

## Communication Assistants

Not everyone wants or needs a communication assistant - but those who have used the services of trained AAC communication assistants - LOVE them!

With funding from the Government of Canada's Social Development Partnerships Program, ACCPC is conducting a pilot project in Toronto that provides trained communication assistants (CAs) for adults who use AAC. The project is being evaluated as a model for a potential national support service.

Nine adults who use AAC are participating and have been involved in training programs to support them in directing a communication assistant. Thirteen communication assistants have been trained in group and one to one sessions with the AAC participants.

The role of an AAC communication assistant is to support the person who uses AAC in conveying his/her messages to another person while ensuring accuracy, autonomy, privacy and dignity. The CAs use specific strategies to empower people who use AAC in face-to-face conversations, over the telephone, in written correspondence and when accessing information.

AAC participants have been overwhelmingly positive about their use of the communication assistant service.



*Lynda McQuillan (right) with CA, Edrick Street-Thomas*

One participant used a CA to help her communicate with her doctors prior to and during her hospitalization. "When I used a CA, I felt

people listened to me. I was respected and I got good service. When I was transferred to a rehab facility, I didn't have a CA and the difference was really obvious to me. The nurses talked to me like I was mentally incompetent and they told me I was too much trouble. I felt humiliated and the level of care I got was not good."

Check our website in the next few months for more information on our communication assistant program.

We have submitted a proposal to SDPP to continue the Toronto project as a model site for communication support and we hope to replicate the project in Vancouver with Communication Assistance for Young Adults. The Canadian Association of Independent Living Centres is a partner agency working with us on these projects.

## End Exclusion 2007

For the 2nd year, ACCPC represented the needs of people who use AAC at the End Exclusion event in Ottawa. Braving the first major snow storm of the year, Hazel Self, Anne Abbott, Marsha Brown and Barbara Collier marched and rolled to Parliament Hill and huddled around the eternal flame for warmth as they, along with many other organizations endorsed a national action plan for inclusion for people with disabilities.



Anne Abbott representing ACCPC, uses the communication assistance of Marsha Brown to talk with The Right Hon. Peter MacKay at End Exclusion 2007. The Minister later endorsed the value of having a communication assistant support him in communicating with Anne.

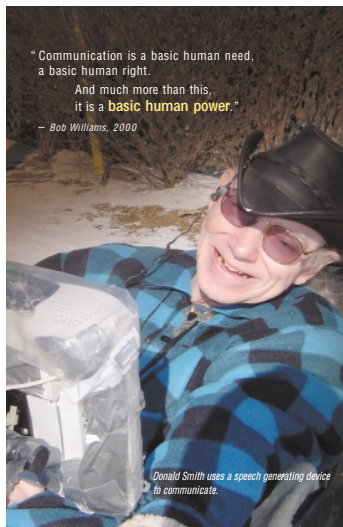
## Access

ACCPC has responded to various drafts of accessibility standards put forward by The Ontario Accessibility Directorate. Most of the proposed standards refer to making information accessible for people who are deaf, hard of hearing or visually impaired. We have highlighted the need for a broader definition

of communication support to include what a person needs to communicate in face-to-face interactions, telephone, written communication and access to information. We will continue to attend meetings and provide input to this committee.

## Access to Justice

Our web based resources on communication access to the Justice System are available on our website.



"Communication is a basic human need, a basic human right. And much more than this, it is a basic human power."  
- Bob Williams, 2000

Donald Smith uses a speech generating device to communicate.

Front cover: Anne Abbott communicates by spelling words on her display.

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With funding contribution from Department of Justice Canada

Free resources available at:  
[www.accpc.ca/equaljustice.htm](http://www.accpc.ca/equaljustice.htm)

This project was funded by Justice Canada. We used video clips to show the different types of supports that a person who uses AAC might need when accessing police, legal or court services. The team that worked on this project included Aaron Shelbourne, Anne Abbott, Darlene Gallant, Donald Smith and Al Sunisloe as AAC consultants. Pam Cross, a well respected human rights lawyer and Fran Odette, consultant in disability and violence guided us throughout the project. Brochures about the resources have been distributed to over 500 disability and legal services throughout Canada.

## Substance Abuse:

ACCPC consulted to CAILC on a national project to implement a promotion and prevention

strategy around substance abuse for persons with disabilities.

## Workshop:

In May, 2007, ACCPC hosted a fund raising workshop presented by Janice Light Ph.D. on maximizing the literacy skills of individuals who require AAC. 140 participants attended the day which was held at the Ontario Science Centre.



## ACCPC Presentations:

Barbara Collier and Tony Diamanti were honored to present the keynote address at the USSAAC annual conference in LA, March 2007. Their presentation was entitled "Fostering self-advocacy in youth who use AAC". In August 2008, Barbara and Anne Abbott have been invited to present a pre-conference seminar at the ISAAC conference in Montreal on "Promoting Self-Direction and Consumer Control in Home and Community Services." Meanwhile, Hazel Self and Barbara Collier are contributing a chapter on preparing youth who use AAC for adulthood for an AAC book on transitions.

As we look forward to 2008, we hope that we can continue to work with you and other organizations to address social justice issues and promote accessible communities for Canadians who use AAC. If you are interested in getting involved in any way with ACCPC, please contact us.

Hazel Self  
Chair of ACCPC on behalf of the Board.

Barbara Collier  
Executive Director of ACCPC.

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