

Affordable AAC Devices

The following article was summarized from ASHA.org

Affordability and augmentative communication are two terms that typically do not ever appear in the same sentence, unless in the negative context (i.e. 'augmentative communication is not affordable').

The major alternative/augmentative communication (AAC) device makers have long claimed innocence under the argument that it has been their own research and development dollars that have gone into producing these devices. To that end, they need to keep their prices high in order to maintain a high quality product.

Although that argument does have its merits, one has to wonder whether a \$3,000 or \$4,000 communication device is really a justifiable price. Instead we, as clinicians, and our clients rely on insurers and grants to subsidize the costs that we incur. With the advent of such personal computing devices as the iPad, the iPod and

tablet PC's, someone made the realization that AAC doesn't necessarily have to be expensive anymore.

One can trace the emergence of today's low cost computing to the surge in popularity of the netbook (those adorable 9 or 10 inch computers that seemed to go mainstream almost instantly). With some very capable low cost touch-screen computers out there, it makes a lot of sense for individual users to put together their own AAC systems for around \$500 or \$600. The process to create your own device involves buying a touch-screen tablet PC, iPad, or other device and then the associated communication software. The best part of such systems is that they are not dedicated communication devices, meaning the user can access programs aside from the communication software on the system. Whether it is the adult stroke victim or the autistic child, having a variety of applications available (e.g. email, games, word processing, etc.) in addition to communication software is great thing to provide a client with true accessibility. Of course, there are drawbacks to creating your own AAC device. Such systems would not be paid for by any insurance company, as they are not dedicated devices.

Do-it-yourself AAC devices may not be for everyone, but they certainly fill a major gap in the market of devices currently available.

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The article can be viewed in its entirety at <http://blog.asha.org/page/3/>.

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YOU'RE INVITED!!!

First Annual APAC (Autism Parent Advisory Committee) Fashion Show

Students of the John S. Charlton School will be modeling the latest PROM fashions!

The Blue - Gold Club, a buddy system for special needs children, will be assisting the models in order to assure a night of success!

Sponsors and donations are welcome!

A BIG Thank You to:

- ★ **Polytech Visual communications students for designing the flyer and tickets**
- ★ **Bel Boutique will be providing the dresses**

**Informational tables - \$10 to set up
April 1, 2011
7-9 pm
\$3 ticket**

**For more information contact: Kelly
Worthington 302-284-2727**

Look What's Happening

February

- 8: Boy Scout Day
- 14: Valentine's Day

March

- 2: Read Across America
 - 8: Mardi Gras
- 20: First Day of Spring

April

- 22: Earth Day



Did you Know?

- ? A child with an auditory processing disorder may have difficulty filtering speech from background noise, such as a noisy classroom.
- ? Speech delays can be hereditary.



- ? Many famous individuals in entertainment, sports and politics stutter.
Marilyn Monroe
Sir Winston Churchill
Bruce Willis
V.P. Joe Biden

**“Speech-Language Pathology-
because silence isn't always
golden”**

