



International Society For
Augmentative And Alternative Communication

**INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR
AUGMENTATIVE AND ALTERNATIVE
COMMUNICATION**

ISAAC INDIA

Newsletter

**2025 - ISSUE 5
AUGUST 2025**

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

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From the Desk of ISAAC India Chapter

Note from The Secretary, ISAAC India

In India, the field of Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) is still young but full of promise. For the past 15 years, ISAAC India has been taking small but steady steps to make the wheel of change turn for people with complex communication needs. Each effort—whether through awareness, training, or clinical practice—has contributed to moving AAC forward in our country. While the pace may sometimes feel slow, the direction has always been clear: toward inclusion, participation, and the recognition of communication as a fundamental human right.

Although our chapter is small, the impact of these efforts is visible—in clinics, classrooms, homes, and communities where AAC is gradually opening doors. Every member has played a part, balancing professional responsibilities with the larger vision of creating an India where every person has a voice.

As we look ahead, I envision a way to strengthen our community while reducing the burden on individuals. My wish is to see the creation of regional zones, each guided by representatives who can form local working groups. These groups would bring together ISAAC members as well as enthusiastic professionals, students, and families who may not yet be members but share our passion for AAC. Local initiatives—whether awareness campaigns, collaborative projects, or support networks—can help us grow participation and build momentum.

Over time, I believe these local efforts can connect into a stronger national network, where no individual carries the weight alone. This is about collective leadership, shared energy, and building an AAC movement together.

My vision for the future is an India where AAC is recognized, accessible, and celebrated; where children and adults with complex communication needs find their voices supported; and where ISAAC India continues to serve as a catalyst for collaboration, innovation, and advocacy.

We warmly invite members and non-members alike to join us in this journey. Together, we can make communication truly universal.

**- Dr. Vineetha Philip
Secretary
ISAAC - India Chapter**



WEBINAR DETAILS

Details of Conferences/Seminars/Workshops on AAC being held across the world between Sept 2025 to Dec 2025

DATE	EVENT NAME	FORMAT	LOCATION
Sept 7–10, 2025	Communication Matters AAC Conference	In-person	Leeds, England
Sept 12, 2025	RCI CRE National Workshop on Augmentative and Alternative Communication Understanding and Implementation of Alternative Communication Methods	In-person	JSS Institute of Speech and Hearing, Mysuru, Karnataka, India
Sept 26, 2025	Indiana AAC Summit 2025	In-person	Westfield, Indiana (USA)
Sept 28, 2025	NWACS Virtual Fall Conference	Online	Virtual (U.S.)
Oct 28–29, 2025	ISAAC Virtual Event 2025	Online	Virtual
Nov 6–7, 2025	“Talking AAC” Conference	In-person	East Lansing, Michigan (USA)
Nov 6–8, 2025	AAC Congress “Connecting Worlds”	Hybrid	Leipzig, Germany

Efficacy and social validity of intervention using speech generating device and tactile symbols to develop communication and language in a child with visual impairment and additional disability

Vineetha Sara Philip, Suryasree P. K. & Kripa Elizebath Santhosh (30 Jul 2025): , Disability and Rehabilitation: Assistive Technology, DOI: 10.1080/17483107.2025.2539436

Abstract:

Visual impairment (VI) can significantly hinder language development in children. While VI alone may not drastically alter the trajectory of language acquisition, the presence of additional disabilities can pose significant challenges. Despite these difficulties, augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) strategies, such as speech-generating devices (SGDs) and tactile symbols, have shown promise in supporting communication and language development in such children. This study investigated the efficacy of a targeted AAC intervention utilizing an SGD and individualized tactile symbols to enhance communication functions, receptive and expressive language skills in a non-verbal child with VI and additional disabilities. Additionally, the study explored the caregiver's satisfaction with the intervention. A longitudinal case study method was employed to meet the study purpose. A baseline assessment of communication and language skills was done prior to intervention. Intervention using SGD and tactile symbols were carried out in three phases and outcomes were measured once during the intervention phase and once again after providing intervention. The intervention, conducted over 40 sessions, yielded positive results, demonstrating a significant impact on the child's communication and language development. Notably, the child also developed meaningful speech during the intervention period. The primary caregiver rated the outcomes of the intervention as highly beneficial to the child. The study concludes that a well-structured intervention, incorporating both technological and tactile modalities, can substantially enhance the speech, language, and communication skills of children with VI and additional disabilities.

ISAAC INDIA VIRTUAL CONFERENCE

The theme for the event will be "**Innovation, Inclusion, and Advocacy in AAC**", with sessions scheduled to be held on 28th and 29th October 2025. Conference is offering ISAAC Council an exciting opportunity to help shape the scientific program for this year's virtual event! Each Council-represented Chapter or Region the opportunity of designating up to three (3) presentation submissions, as "Council Endorsed" presentations. The three presentations from **ISAAC India** are listed below:

1. Title: **Innovative customized solutions for communication needs in India**

Authors: Venkat Raman Prusty, Audiologist, Speech Language Pathologist, Department of ENT, Head & Neck surgery, All India Institute of Medical Sciences, Bhubaneswar

2. Title: **Communication Partner Profiling Among Primary caretakers of children who use Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC)**

Authors: Ms. Veena Mohan, Sr. Lecturer, National Institute of Speech & Hearing (NISH), Trivandrum

Dr.Suja K Kunnath, Principal and professor, National Institute of Speech & Hearing, Trivandrum.

3. Title: **Innovation, Inclusion, and Advocacy in Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) in India: A Gap Analysis in Implementation**

Authors: Kamal Sharma, Full-Time PhD Scholar under Founder Chancellor Shri N. P. V. Ramasamy Udayar Fellowship at Sri Ramachandra Faculty of Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology, SRIHER (DU), Chennai,

Krupa M, Associate Professor, Department of Speech Language Pathology, Sri Ramachandra Faculty of Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology, SRIHER (DU), Chennai

Vidya Ramkumar, Professor, Department of Audiology, Sri Ramachandra Faculty of Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology, SRIHER (DU), Chennai

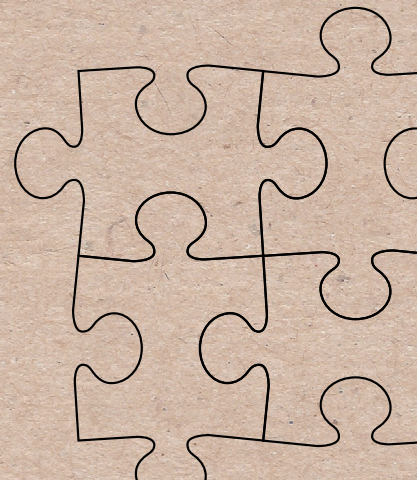
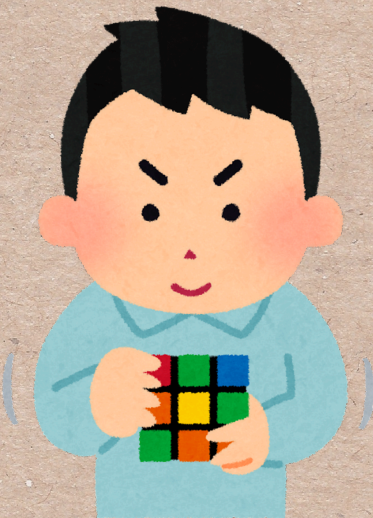
Anil Prabhakar, Professor, Department of Electrical Engineering, Indian Institute of Technology, Chennai.

PUZZLE TIME I

SOLVE THE CRYPTOQUIP

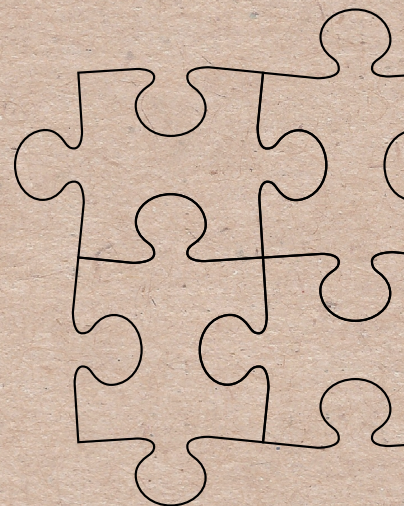
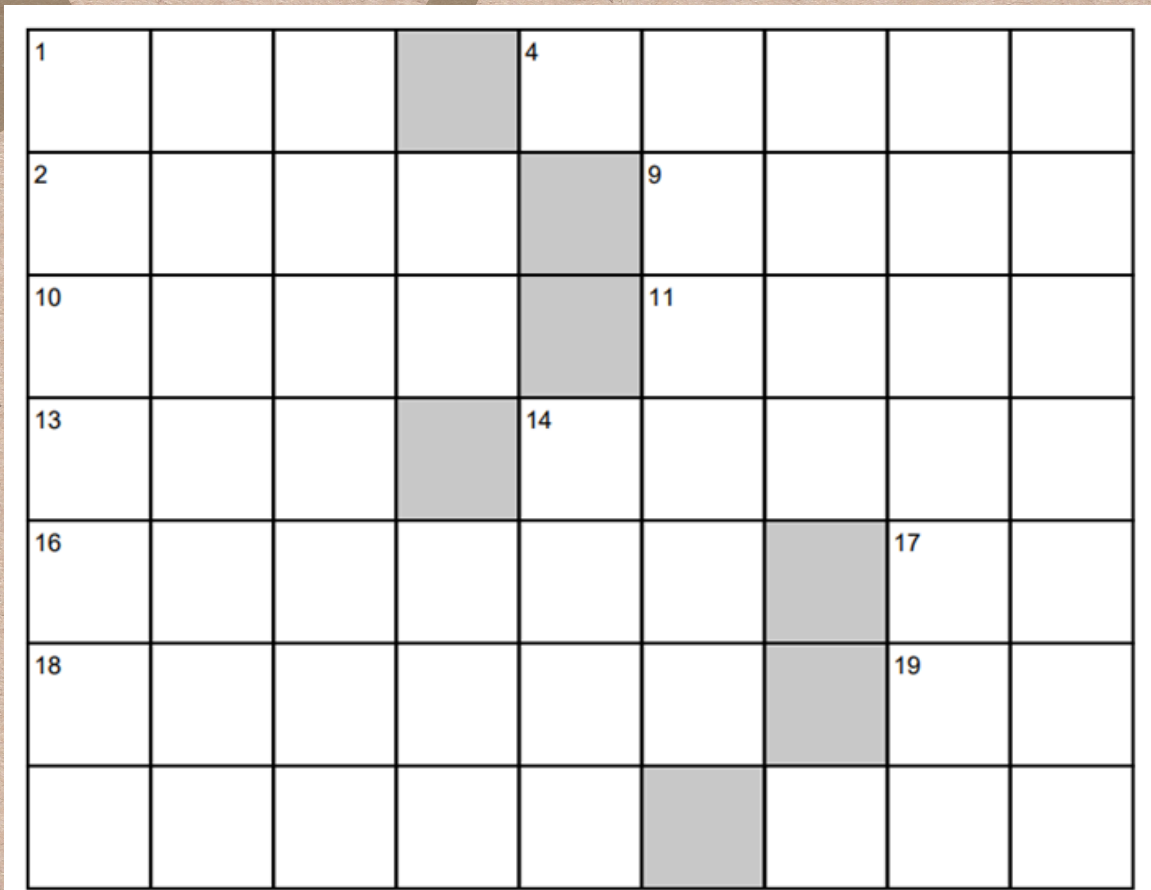
QQJ ZXTY OXE KPOZTR YNTTJK;
PE XGETO KTSNY SQOFVQFT
FRXI

Hint: Q = A



PUZZLE TIME II

SOLVE THE CROSSWORD



PUZZLE TIME II

CLUES FOR CROSSWORD

ACROSS:

- 1.(1) Communication methods beyond speech (abbr.)
- 2.(1,5) High-frequency words used everywhere (two words)
- 3.(2) Picture system for communication (abbr.)
- 4.(2,5) Strategy: "model" by using the device with speech
- 5.(3) Framework: Pragmatic Organisation Dynamic Display (abbr.)
- 6.(3,5) The sound others hear when a device speaks
- 7.(4) Professional who supports AAC (abbr.)
- 8.(4,5) Eye-based access method (two words)
- 9.(5) Spoken output of many AAC devices
10. (6) Strong, flexible—what good AAC systems should be
11. (7) Communication method using symbols, devices, or partner
12. (7,5) No device needed; relies on body or signs

DOWN:

- 1.(1) Short form for Augmentative and Alternative Communication
- 2.(2) Symbol-based exchange system
- 3.(3) Organised book/device with tabs for navigation (abbr.)
- 4.(4) Speech-Language professional (abbr.)
- 5.(4,5) Technology using eyes to select
- 6.(5) The sound produced by speech or AAC device
- 7.(6) Describes strong, resilient AAC systems
- 8.(7) A type of AAC where tools support communication
- 9.(7,5) Uses only natural abilities like speech, gestures, or signs

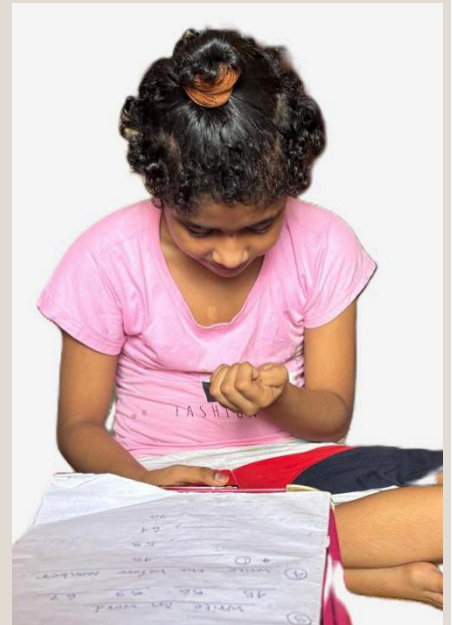


VOICES FROM USER

Empowering Voices: Ayushmita's Journey from Silence to Expression

Meet Ayushmita, an 8-year-old bright and creative girl from Tripura, whose journey with communication has been nothing short of inspiring. Born with speech and language challenges, Ayushmita faced difficulties expressing her thoughts, emotions, and dreams.

However, with the power of Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) and teletherapy, she has embarked on a transformational journey—one that has unlocked her ability to communicate, learn, and dream bigger than ever before.

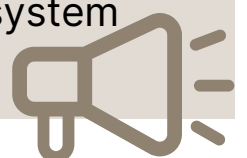


The Beginning: Low-Tech AAC Systems

Ayushmita's communication journey began with low-tech AAC systems. She started with communication books, picture cards, and the Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS). These tools helped her associate images with words, allowing her to express basic needs and preferences. While these methods provided a foundation, her therapists and family knew she had the potential for more.

Transition to High-Tech AAC: Finding Her Voice

As Ayushmita grew more comfortable with low-tech AAC, her Speech and Language Therapist introduced her to high-tech AAC applications through trial sessions with two to three different AAC apps. Each app offered unique features, but after careful consideration of keeping affordability and ease of use in mind, a suitable high-tech AAC system was selected as her primary communication tool.





VOICES FROM USER

The intuitive design of high-tech AAC, with its vibrant icons and speech output, allowed Ayushmita to form sentences, express her thoughts, and even practice reading.

With consistent practice, she began recognizing words of common items and constructing simple sentences independently. What was once a struggle—expressing her needs, feelings, and ideas—became an exciting opportunity for her to engage with the world.

Breaking Barriers: Speaking Her Mind

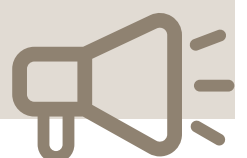
Today, Ayushmita's progress is remarkable. She can now:

- Read words related to everyday objects.
- Speak 1-2 sentences on her own.
- Combine sentences to express herself in selected activities.

Her confidence has soared, and her personality shines through every interaction. Whether she's asking for her favourite colours or sharing her thoughts about a drawing, her voice—both digital and spoken—is growing stronger every day.

A Dream Taking Shape: The Future Artist

Beyond communication, Ayushmita has a big dream to become an artist. She loves arts and crafts, spending hours exploring colours, shapes, and textures. Drawing is not just a hobby for her; it's a way to communicate her imagination when words are still evolving. With her newfound ability to express herself, she is even more determined to pursue her passion.





VOICES FROM USER

A Message of Hope and Motivation

Ayushmita's story is a testament to the power of perseverance, technology, and inclusive education. For parents, educators, and therapists working with children who have communication difficulties, her journey serves as a reminder that:

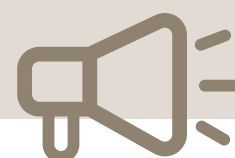
- Every child has potential - it just takes the right tools to unlock it.
- Assistive technology is transformative - whether low-tech or high-tech, the right AAC system can change lives.
- Dreams are valid - with support, children like Ayushmita can achieve anything they set their hearts on.

If Ayushmita can go from struggling to speak to forming sentences and chasing her artistic dreams, so can others. Let's continue to advocate for accessible communication tools, inclusive learning, and unwavering belief in every child's abilities.

Because when a child finds their voice, the world gains a new story worth hearing.

Do you know a child who could benefit from AAC? Share this story and inspire hope!

Interview & article by Mr. Kamal Sharma, PhD Scholar, Sri Ramachandra Faculty of Audiology & Speech Language Pathology, SRIHER (DU), Chennai





TECH UPDATE

TECH INNOVATION AND INCUBATION FROM ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS IN INDIA

Prof. Vidya Ramkumar, Ph.D. (Speech and Hearing) &

Mr. R. Vishnu Saravana, MSc. (Audiology) - director@asphear.com

Across India, academic institutions are increasingly becoming launchpads for innovation. Traditionally, research findings remain within laboratories or academic journals, but today there is a strong push towards technology transfer—moving ideas from classrooms and research labs into the hands of people who can benefit from them.

Technology Transfer: From Lab to Market

Technology transfer is the process by which innovations through research and development developed at universities/ academic /research institutes are taken forward for public use via commercialization. This can happen either through licensing to an established company or by faculty/students starting a company that develops and markets the product. For India, where academic research output is high, this is a significant shift.

Incubation Models in India

India is now home to several incubators that support such transfer of technology and ideas. Incubators are run predominantly by governments and academic institutions. They support innovators in business development, compliance, funding, and mentorship. These centers reflect how India is building a structured pipeline for tech transfer, ensuring that academic research translates into products with real-world value.



TECH UPDATE

Asphear- an example of technology transfer from academia-industry

Asphear Technologies & Services Pvt Ltd is a startup founded by an academic researcher Prof. Vidya Ramkumar at Sri Ramachandra Faculty of Audiology and Speech Language Pathology, SRIHER (DU) Chennai. Dr. Deepashri Joshi and Mr. Vishnu Saravana (Research scholars) from her lab, who worked on the R&D, are directors in the company. The first product launched through the company is the SRESHT Hearing Screener.

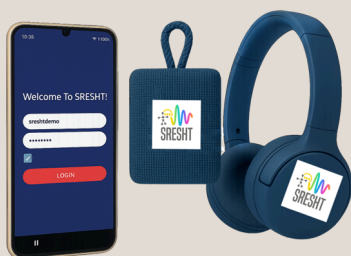
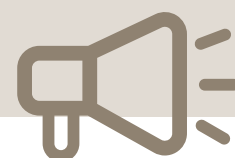


Image-1: SRESHT Hearing Screener

The technology was originally developed through a DBT/Wellcome-funded grant and fellowship awarded to the founder. The tool is a mobile-based, low-cost hearing screener for children aged 3 months to 6 years, designed for use by any health care professional.

The technology was transferred to Asphear for scaling and integration with a secure cloud-based data management system. To accelerate this journey, the company is incubated in IIT Madras Rural Technology and Business Incubator (RTBI) (Entrepreneurial and business acumen support), Immersive Technology and Entrepreneurship Lab (ITEL) (industry mentoring and technological support), and is also in the process of being incubated in Sri Ramachandra Innovation and Incubation Centre (SRIIC), Chennai (academic mentorship and clinical validation). Therefore, the momentum for technology transfer from academic institutions is building rapidly. With structured incubators, supportive policies (National Innovation and Start-up Policy) the country is steadily building a sustainable ecosystem where research reaches the stakeholders and creates a new avenue for entrepreneurship, innovation and job creation.



COMIC TIME

AAC – YOUR FRIEND



NOTE

We would love to hear about the activities and initiatives you are conducting to raise awareness about AAC and research work in the field of AAC!

**Please share the reference to
secretaryisaacindia@gmail.com**

DEADLINE: 20th October

Readers Column

This place is for you!!!

Please send your
comments/suggestions for our
next issue

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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Website and Social media committee

Headed by Ms Bhavana Botta

Newsletter

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

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