Gaze controlled systems for children with multiple disabilities – an evaluation
- an ongoing study

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Background

- The only way for independent activity?
- A way of learning the concept of using pictures and symbols for communication
- Easier to understand the child’s gaze direction
- Importance of functional grids and adaptations
- Importance of experience when assessing a gaze controlled system for children with severe multiple disabilities
Background

- Possibility to receive a gaze controlled computer?
- Uncertainty of how the computers are used and if the goals for communication and inclusion are achieved?

Aim

- Was the goal of a gaze controlled system achieved? Current use.
- What seems to be essential for how children and adolescents with multiple disabilities are able to use gaze controlled computers to influence their environment

Method

- Questionnaires to relatives and professionals of children that have done assessment at DART (n 38)
- Semi structured interviews are planned with key persons involved in assessment/use of a gaze controlled systems – 10 children who are using a system and 5 who don’t
- Talking Mats – when possible
Questionnaire

- A quantitative cross-sectional survey; questionnaire with 31 questions (both yes-and no-questions and questions with several alternatives)

Results of the questionnaire

Relatives/professionals of 20 children answered the questionnaire

- 1 did not use the computer because of illness
- 1 never received a computer after the assessment
- 1 had returned the computer

Age 4 – 19 (at assessment)

- 8 boys/11 girls (1 unknown)
- 3 very severe motor disorders
- 11 severe cognitive disorders
Goal with the assessment;
- Communication 20
- Play 7
- School work 6
- Leisure time 3

Current use;
- Communication 15 (of 17)
- Play 9
- School work 8
- Leisure time 6

- 9 of the children use their computer every day
- 3 use the computer 4-7 times per week
- 5 use the computer 1-3 times per week
- 14 of the children needed somebody present all the time they used the computer
- 3 of the children needed help to prepare the computer before use

- The computer have been an important tool in daily living for 14 of the children
- There have been technical problems for 15 of the children's computers

- 12 of the children had to wait more than a month before receiving the computer
- 1 child had to wait for more than 6 months
- 3 children had to wait for more than a year!
Some comments

- More time for tutoring
- Long time between assessment and receiving the computer
- More time for designing applications
- The hardware is heavy and hard to transport
- Continuous help with training
- Continuous evaluation
- Satisfied!

Discussion

- Few questionnaires returned
- Difficult to transfer to other groups
- Need of training and evaluation

Thanks!

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