

POSITION STATEMENT ON FACILITATED COMMUNICATION

For Immediate Release

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ISAAC Announces the Formation of a Committee to Develop an Official Position Statement on Facilitated Communication (FC)

Woodbridge, Ontario, CANADA — May 11th, 2012 — Dr. Erna Alant, President of the International Society for Augmentative and Alternative Communication (ISAAC), today announced the formation of an ad hoc committee to assist the Executive Board in the development of an official ISAAC position statement on Facilitated Communication (FC). Directly responsible to the ISAAC Executive Board, the FC Position Statement Committee has been charged with a detailed examination of existing research and literature on FC and, in conjunction with the ISAAC Executive Board, the development of an official ISAAC FC Position Statement.

The FC Position Statement Committee is composed of six (6) members plus a Committee Chair, who will be assisted in their work by four (4) independent readers. The Committee members and independent readers were selected to ensure that the final developed position statement would be broad-based, representing input from professionals possessing significant experience in augmentative and alternative communication (AAC). Each Committee member and independent reader has, on average, over twenty years (20) of experience in the field of AAC for individuals with autism and other developmental disabilities.

In keeping with ISAAC's status as an international organization, the Committee members and independent readers have been selected to provide a global perspective, and represent North America, Europe, and Australasia / Oceania.

ISAAC welcomes input from its members, to assist the FC Position Statement Committee in its review. The attached document provides additional information regarding the submission of materials. The deadline for receiving initial materials is June 15th, 2012. ISAAC will make every effort to have a draft position statement ready for release to coincide with its 15th Biennial Conference, being held in Pittsburgh, USA from July 28th to August 4th, 2012. Members will have an additional and final sixty (60) day period after the release of the draft position statement, to provide further materials, prior to the finalization of the proposed FC position statement.

In keeping with the practice of many other scientific organizations engaged in the development of position statements (for example, those on FC) through the efforts of an "eminent persons" volunteer group, the names of the Committee members and independent readers will not be released. ISAAC provides a single contact for all communication and materials submission regarding this effort, namely ISAAC's Executive Director, Franklin Smith.

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.

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Material / Input Submission Guidelines

1. Who may submit materials for consideration?
ISAAC welcomes input of comments and materials from current members.
2. To whom may materials be submitted?
ISAAC members may provide comments and materials electronically to the ISAAC Executive Director, Franklin Smith, at franklin@isaac-online.org.
3. What materials may be submitted?
 - a. *Additional peer-reviewed research evidence (i.e., empirical studies, systematic reviews) and/or appraisal of such evidence. Videotaped or other digital video interactions will not be accepted.*
 - b. *The study or review must evaluate the authorship of the messages; descriptive analyses of output generated by someone using Facilitated Communication will not be reviewed unless there has been prior independent verification that the authorship has been attributed to the individual using Facilitated Communication.*
 - c. *Due to resource limitations, the committee can only consider additional materials (see a. and b. above) that are published in English (English appraisals of non-English original studies and reviews will be considered only if the Committee can verify the findings).*
 - d. *Materials must be clearly readable, and submitted in a standard electronic digital format (ie. Adobe pdf, jpg, etc.).*
 - e. *There are no limitations on the length of submitted materials.*
4. By when do additional documents or materials need to be submitted?
Additional materials have to be received within 60 days of the posting of the draft position statement in order to receive full consideration.