

# Low Technology AAC Systems (Augmentative and Alternative Communication)

Many individuals experience communication difficulties or have limitations in their speech, language, reading and writing as a result of acquired disabilities, congenital disabilities, or neurological differences. A Speech Pathologist can assist individuals with communication impairments, and their family and friends to find ways to improve communication, such as using Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC).

Low technology (low-tech) AAC systems are a form of aided AAC as an external resource utilised to assist the individual's communication. These systems are not battery powered and are often referred to as Visual Communication Aids. Low-tech AAC systems can often be a less expensive option, with some systems being constructed with hands-on materials at home. Low-tech options can often be more durable and can be used in instances where a high-tech option may not be appropriate (For example whilst swimming or in the shower). There are many low-tech systems available, with some of the key systems outlined below.

## **Pragmatic Organisation Dynamic Display (PODD) Communication Books**

The PODD Communication Books are books or devices containing pictures and symbols that people use to communicate. PODD refers to a way of organising language (a whole-word and symbol vocabulary) in a book, thus not all communication books are PODD books.

The main aim of a PODD book is to provide a list of vocabulary, for the user to convey a range of messages, in multiple environments, across a range of communication functions. It allows for requests, greetings, comments, questions, opinions, feelings and more. All PODDs are custom-made and suited to the users and different types may work better for different people and situations.



## Talking Mats Communication System – Low Technology

A Talking Mat is a visual communication framework which supports people with communication difficulties to express their feelings and views. A Low-Tech Talking Mat uses a simple visual system of three sets of communication symbols (topic, options and visual scale) and a textured mat as the visual space to display the symbols on.

Once the topic has been chosen, the participant is given the options one at a time and asked to think about each one, placing it on the Talking Mat to indicate how they feel about it. Talking Mats supports an individual's comprehension by giving the person time to process concepts and respond in their own time, breaking down the information into small manageable steps, and reduces memory demands. A Talking Mat is a low-cost and simple-to-use AAC system that can be used in most environments. A digital version of Talking Mats is also available.



## E-Tran Communication Board

The E-Tran communication board is a non-electronic communication aid for people using eye pointing access for communication. E-Tran Boards are also known as eye-gaze spelling boards. It has an alphanumeric display in eight groupings around a rectangular opening on a clear perspex sheet. The board allows the user to indicate symbols to the communication partner by looking at the relevant area on the board, allowing them to spell out intended words to communicate.



## Frenchay Alphabet Board (FAB™)

The Frenchay Alphabet Board is a portable alphabet board which is used to support a person with communication difficulties. It has a clear plastic keyguard to support accurate finger location and a non-slip base. The board has yellow letters on a blue background. The keyboard is washable. It comes in two sizes and two layouts (QWERTY or ABC).



# More information

For further information, or advice, about any item contained in this information sheet, please contact Independent Living Centre Tasmania Inc.(ILCT):

- Call 1300 452 827 to speak to a health professional.
- Visit our website [www.ilct.com.au](http://www.ilct.com.au) or email [info@ilct.com.au](mailto:info@ilct.com.au).
- ILCT visits communities around Tasmania. Contact ILCT to find out when we will be in your area.

ILCT provides Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy, Speech Pathology, and Allied Health Assistant services, on a fee-for-service basis. Our team delivers comprehensive assessments and support that may include assistive technology, home modifications, communication aids, and other tailored interventions to enhance independence and quality of life.

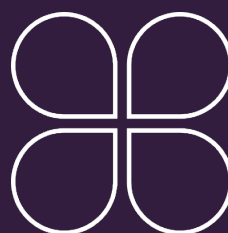
ILCT specifically provides supports to those aged over 18, who are Tasmanian residents and are of any culturally-diverse background. ILCT are a registered provider under the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

Independent Living Centre Tas Inc. (ILCT) acknowledges the generous support of the Tasmanian Government – Department of Health through the Home and Community Care (HACC) Program, and the Australian Government – Department of Health and Aged Care through the My Aged Care – Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP). Their ongoing contributions enable the continued provision of these information sheets and our information services.

## Disclaimer

Independent Living Centre Tasmania Inc.(ILCT) is a not-for-profit organisation and does not sell, design, or manufacture equipment or products. Information provided by ILCT is intended as a general guide only, and may not be comprehensive, or up to date. Whilst every effort is made, to ensure accuracy, ILCT cannot guarantee that all information provided is correct. Any pricing information is indicative only and may be subject to change. Users should contact suppliers directly for current pricing and product availability. The inclusion of product or service information does not constitute a recommendation or endorsement by ILCT. Individuals are responsible for making their own informed choices and are strongly encouraged to seek professional advice before selecting equipment or services. ILCT accepts no liability for any loss, damage, or injury arising from the selection, or use of products, or services, based on information provided. Users must always follow any professional advice received and the manufacturer's instructions for use.

© 2025 ISCO-05



**Independent  
Living Centre  
Tasmania**