

Apps for Autism

We continue to discover the diverse ways technology can help our kids with autism communicate, learn, and play. The exciting bonus is that new technology is opening doors of communication that didn't exist even a few years ago. These applications – or in the lingo, “apps” – offer practical assistance that is neither burdensome nor potentially embarrassing as kids grow older and are more socially aware of their peers. Even if our kids don't text messages at the speed of light, how satisfying to be able to offer a tool that works with a convenient iPhone or iPod.

The folks at SimplifiedTouch.com say, “Simplified concepts with high functionality” and that's the perfect description for the following list of apps available for iPhone and iPod Touch. One can only dream of what the next one might be!



YesNo from SimplifiedTouch
www.simplifiedtouch.com

Really simple, with two large color-coordinated buttons: A green one labeled “yes” and a red one labeled “no.” When a button is pressed a voice speaks the selection. The goal is to provide an easy straightforward way for non-verbal kids to answer simple questions.



Proloquo2Go™ from AssistiveWare
www.proloquo2go.com/

Used to augment communication, it is marketed as “full-featured communications for people who have difficulty speaking.” It provides text-to-speech, up-to-date symbols based on PECs, and a vocabulary of over 7000 items.



Signs4Baby from Signing Time
www.signingtime.com

Did you ever imagine you could learn American Sign Language with an iPhone app? This version is for babies but apps are also available for different age groups.



Word Magic and Math Magic
www.anusen.com/

Brightly colored designs will grab kids' attention. Designed to teach basic math and spelling skills, kids just touch the answer and if it's correct a voice gives them praise. For every five correct answers they receive a colored star. Some of the other apps available include Match Magic, Count Magic and Sight Words and Digraphs.



Cute Math

<http://ibokan.com/2009/cute-math/>

This app uses animations and voices to teach math basics from counting and sequences to addition and subtraction.



iConverse by Xcellent Creations, Inc.
www.converseapp.com/

To replace bulky communication devices, this program uses six buttons that represent the most basic needs a child might want to communicate. When the button is touched, auditory and visual representations of the need are activated. You can make your own custom icons and add text to the pictures.



Pix Talk Communication Software – for Smartphone or PDA
www.communicationautism.com

This software downloads a PECS-style system to any Smartphone or PDA that runs Microsoft Windows Mobile Operating System. Developed by a group of researchers, a prototype has been released and is available as a free download from their web site. The smallest version includes 30 picture images (10 food, 10 drinks and 10 body parts).

Beyond iPhones and iPods, other great technology is available:



**Wrist Talker,
Hip Talk and
Hip Step-Talking Sequencer**



from Enabling Devices
<http://enablingdevices.com/catalog>



These communication devices are worn around the wrist or waist. They allow you to record messages your child can play back by simply pushing a button. You can label the buttons with your own icons so that they're familiar to your child.



(Link quickly and easily to these apps vendors by going to the Newsbite page at the AADigest website. www.autismdigest.com. Find a copy of this newsbite there.)

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Know of more apps for autism? Email ideas to the AADigest and we'll share them in future issues!



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