

syracuse university facilitated communication

syracuse university facilitated communication represents a focal point in the study and application of assisted communication methods aimed at supporting individuals with complex communication needs. This approach, often associated with augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) techniques, has been explored and implemented within various academic and clinical settings, including projects and research at Syracuse University. The university's involvement in facilitated communication encompasses examination of its methodologies, outcomes, and controversies, providing valuable insights into its efficacy and ethical considerations. This article delves into the historical context, research contributions, practical applications, and critical perspectives surrounding Syracuse University facilitated communication initiatives. Readers will gain a comprehensive understanding of how this institution's work has influenced communication strategies for individuals facing speech and language challenges. The discussion further outlines the university's role in advancing knowledge, training professionals, and shaping policies related to facilitated communication.

- Historical Background of Facilitated Communication at Syracuse University
- Research and Development Initiatives
- Practical Applications and Training Programs
- Ethical Considerations and Controversies
- Impact on Communication Disorders and AAC Field

Historical Background of Facilitated Communication at Syracuse University

The history of facilitated communication at Syracuse University traces back to the broader movement to support individuals with severe communication impairments through assisted methods. Facilitated communication (FC) emerged in the late 20th century as a technique in which a facilitator supports a person's hand or arm to help them type or point to letters. Syracuse University became one of the academic centers involved in studying and applying FC in educational and clinical contexts.

This method initially garnered significant interest due to its potential to unlock communication abilities in non-verbal individuals, particularly those

with autism spectrum disorder and other developmental disabilities. Syracuse University's programs contributed to early training and adoption of FC techniques while also engaging in critical analysis and research to validate its effectiveness and address challenges.

Origins and Adoption of FC at Syracuse University

Syracuse University adopted facilitated communication as part of its broader commitment to special education and speech-language pathology disciplines. Faculty and researchers at the university sought to provide innovative communication solutions to individuals with profound disabilities. Early FC programs at Syracuse focused on hands-on training, clinical trials, and integration within educational settings.

Evolution Over Time

Over the years, Syracuse University's approach to facilitated communication evolved in response to emerging research findings and technological advancements. The institution expanded its scope to include alternative AAC methods while continuing to study FC's role and impact. This evolution reflected a growing emphasis on evidence-based practice and ethical safeguards in communication facilitation.

Research and Development Initiatives

Syracuse University facilitated communication efforts have been marked by rigorous research and development activities aimed at understanding the technique's benefits and limitations. The university's faculty and graduate students have contributed to empirical studies, case analyses, and methodological critiques that shape the ongoing discourse around FC.

Empirical Studies on Effectiveness

Several research projects conducted at Syracuse University focused on evaluating the accuracy and authenticity of messages produced through facilitated communication. These studies examined factors such as facilitator influence, user independence, and communication outcomes. The findings have helped delineate contexts in which FC might be effective and those where it may be problematic.

Technological Innovations

The university has also been involved in integrating technology with facilitated communication. This includes developing software tools, adaptive

devices, and digital interfaces designed to enhance user autonomy and reduce facilitator bias. These innovations aim to improve reliability and user experience in AAC interventions.

Collaborative Research Partnerships

Syracuse University has partnered with other academic institutions, clinical centers, and advocacy groups to broaden the scope of FC research. These collaborations have fostered multidisciplinary perspectives and enriched the understanding of facilitated communication's role within the spectrum of communication aids.

Practical Applications and Training Programs

The practical implementation of facilitated communication at Syracuse University extends beyond research into comprehensive training and service delivery. The university provides educational programs for speech-language pathologists, special educators, and caregivers to equip them with the skills necessary for effective communication support.

Professional Training and Certification

Syracuse University offers specialized training courses that cover the theoretical foundations and practical techniques of facilitated communication. These programs emphasize ethical considerations, user-centered approaches, and strategies to foster independent communication. Certification pathways help ensure practitioners meet established competency standards.

Clinical and Educational Services

Through its affiliated clinics and partnerships with local schools, Syracuse University facilitates direct service provision to individuals with communication disabilities. These services include assessment, intervention planning, and ongoing support tailored to each client's unique needs.

Workshops and Community Outreach

The university regularly conducts workshops and seminars aimed at raising awareness about facilitated communication and AAC. These initiatives target families, educators, and the broader community to promote understanding and acceptance of diverse communication methods.

Ethical Considerations and Controversies

Facilitated communication remains a subject of ethical debate and controversy, and Syracuse University's engagement with FC includes critical examination of these issues. The institution advocates for responsible use, scientific scrutiny, and protection of the rights and dignity of individuals using FC.

Concerns About Facilitator Influence

One of the primary ethical concerns involves the potential for facilitator influence, where the facilitator may unintentionally guide the communication, raising questions about authorship and authenticity. Syracuse University's research and training programs address this issue by promoting techniques that maximize user independence and minimize bias.

Evidence-Based Practice and Skepticism

The university acknowledges the necessity of evidence-based practice in AAC and encourages ongoing research to validate FC. While some studies have questioned FC's reliability, Syracuse University supports transparent, scientifically grounded evaluation to determine appropriate applications.

Safeguards and Policy Development

To mitigate ethical risks, Syracuse University contributes to the development of policies and guidelines that govern the use of facilitated communication. These safeguards aim to protect users from harm and ensure that communication interventions are respectful and effective.

Impact on Communication Disorders and AAC Field

Syracuse University facilitated communication initiatives have had a meaningful impact on the broader field of communication disorders and augmentative and alternative communication. The university's work has influenced clinical practices, educational strategies, and policy frameworks.

Advancement of AAC Technologies and Techniques

The university's research and development efforts have contributed to the innovation of AAC technologies, expanding the tools available to individuals with communication challenges. This includes integrating FC with emerging digital communication aids.

Training Future Professionals

By educating future speech-language pathologists, special educators, and related professionals, Syracuse University helps ensure that new generations are prepared to implement diverse communication strategies, including facilitated communication, with competence and ethical awareness.

Influencing National and International Discourse

Syracuse University's scholarship and advocacy have played a role in shaping national and international discussions about the validity and appropriateness of facilitated communication. Through conferences, publications, and partnerships, the university contributes to ongoing dialogue aimed at improving communication access for all.

Key Contributions in Summary

- Comprehensive research on facilitated communication efficacy and challenges
- Innovative integration of technology with communication facilitation
- Robust training programs emphasizing ethical practice
- Development of policies to safeguard users and promote best practices
- Active involvement in advancing AAC fields globally

Frequently Asked Questions

What is facilitated communication and how is it related to Syracuse University?

Facilitated communication (FC) is a technique intended to help individuals with communication disabilities by providing physical support to assist in typing or pointing to letters. Syracuse University has been involved in research and discussions regarding the efficacy and ethical considerations of FC, particularly in its application with individuals with autism and other communication challenges.

Has Syracuse University conducted research on the

effectiveness of facilitated communication?

Yes, researchers affiliated with Syracuse University have examined the effectiveness and validity of facilitated communication. Their studies often highlight concerns about the method, including issues with authorship and the potential for facilitator influence, questioning the reliability of FC as a communication tool.

What controversies surround facilitated communication at Syracuse University?

At Syracuse University, as in other institutions, facilitated communication has been controversial due to studies suggesting that facilitators may unconsciously guide the communication, leading to false messages. This has raised ethical and scientific concerns within the university's research community and among educators.

Are there alternatives to facilitated communication promoted by Syracuse University?

Syracuse University promotes evidence-based augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) methods that are supported by research, such as speech-generating devices and picture exchange systems, as more reliable alternatives to facilitated communication for individuals with communication impairments.

How does Syracuse University support students with communication disabilities in light of facilitated communication debates?

Syracuse University provides comprehensive support services for students with communication disabilities, including access to assistive technology, speech therapy, and specialized academic accommodations. The university emphasizes scientifically supported communication methods rather than facilitated communication to ensure effective and ethical support.

Additional Resources

1. *Voices Unheard: The Story of Facilitated Communication at Syracuse University*

This book explores the history and development of facilitated communication (FC) at Syracuse University. It provides an in-depth look at the pioneering research, the challenges faced by researchers and practitioners, and the impact of FC on individuals with communication disabilities. Through interviews and case studies, the book highlights both successes and controversies in the field.

2. Breaking Barriers: Facilitated Communication and Disability Advocacy at Syracuse

Focusing on the advocacy efforts surrounding facilitated communication at Syracuse University, this book discusses how FC has been used to empower individuals with disabilities. It examines the social and ethical implications of FC and the university's role in promoting inclusive communication strategies. Readers gain insight into the intersection of technology, education, and disability rights.

3. Facilitated Communication in Practice: Lessons from Syracuse University

This practical guide offers detailed methodologies and best practices developed at Syracuse University for implementing facilitated communication. Designed for educators, therapists, and caregivers, the book covers assessment techniques, training protocols, and case examples to help improve communication outcomes for nonverbal individuals. It also addresses common challenges and solutions in FC practice.

4. Controversies and Conversations: The Debate Over Facilitated Communication at Syracuse

This book provides a balanced examination of the controversies surrounding facilitated communication research at Syracuse University. Presenting multiple perspectives from researchers, critics, and families, it delves into the scientific debates, ethical concerns, and the evolving understanding of FC's validity. The book encourages critical thinking and dialogue about alternative communication methods.

5. Empowering Voices: Personal Stories from Syracuse University's Facilitated Communication Program

A collection of heartfelt narratives from individuals who have benefited from facilitated communication at Syracuse University, along with their families and facilitators. These stories illustrate the transformative power of FC in enabling self-expression and independence. The book serves as an inspirational testament to the human spirit and the quest for meaningful communication.

6. Innovations in Assistive Communication: Syracuse University's Role in Facilitated Communication

Highlighting cutting-edge research and technological advances, this book showcases Syracuse University's contributions to the evolution of facilitated communication tools. It covers developments in software, hardware, and training approaches designed to enhance communication access. The book is a valuable resource for researchers and developers interested in assistive technology.

7. From Silence to Speech: The Journey of Facilitated Communication at Syracuse University

This title traces the historical journey of FC from its inception at Syracuse University to its current status in the field of communication disorders. It contextualizes the scientific, social, and educational milestones that have shaped FC's trajectory. The narrative is enriched with archival materials, interviews, and reflections from key figures involved in the movement.

8. *Training Facilitators: Syracuse University's Approach to Effective Communication Support*

Focused on the training programs developed at Syracuse University, this book outlines the skills and knowledge required to become a proficient facilitator in FC. It includes curriculum details, instructional strategies, and evaluation methods used to prepare facilitators. The book emphasizes ethical considerations and the importance of maintaining communication integrity.

9. *Facilitated Communication and Cognitive Science: Insights from Syracuse University Research*

This scholarly work connects facilitated communication with broader cognitive science theories, drawing extensively on research conducted at Syracuse University. It explores how FC challenges traditional notions of cognition, language acquisition, and consciousness. The book appeals to academics, clinicians, and students interested in the scientific foundations of alternative communication methods.

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syracuse university facilitated communication: *Controversial Therapies for Developmental Disabilities* John W. Jacobson, Richard M. Foxx, James A. Mulick, 2005-01-15 One of the largest and most complex human services systems in Western nations has evolved to address the needs of people with developmental disabilities. In the U.S., for example, school budgets are stretched thin by legally mandated special education, and billions of Medicaid dollars annually are consumed by residential and professional services to this population. The temptation of a quick fix is strong. Many parents desperately seek the latest ideas and place pressure on program administrators, who often are not trained to think critically about the evidence base for intervention efforts. The problems of people with developmental disabilities have historically been targeted by a wide range of professionals who rely on clinical experience and intuition and do not submit their claims to the tests of scientific research. Professional entrepreneurs have energetically promoted their treatments to a public perhaps too trustful of those with credentials. Thus, families and their children are buffeted by reforms founded on belief and ideologically driven management. Services fluctuate with the currents of social movements and rapidly shifting philosophies of care as policymakers and providers strive for increased responsiveness and individualization. These forces affect not only where and how, but how well people are served. Too often, services are less effective than they could be, or worse, damaging to personal growth and quality of life. Many treatments are based on poorly understood or even disproven approaches. What approaches to early intervention, education, therapy, and remediation really help those with mental retardation and developmental disabilities improve their functioning and adaptation? And what approaches represent wastes of time, effort, and resources? This book brings together leading behavioral scientists and practitioners to focus light on the major controversies surrounding these questions. The authors review the origins, perpetuation, and resistance to scrutiny of questionable practices, and offer a clear rationale for appraising the quality of services. In an era of increasing accountability, no one with a professional stake in services to individuals with mental retardation and developmental disabilities can afford not to read this book.

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Elizabeth A Kurtz, 2008-02-15 Offering a balanced overview of complementary and alternative therapies, this book will be useful for parents of children with autism, ADD or other learning disabilities. The book covers a wide variety of mind-body interventions and manipulative techniques, as well as energy therapies, biologically based methods, and alternative medical systems.

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deaths of 36 million people from starvation. Presented as truths by authority figures and credentialed experts, bullshit appears legitimate, and we accept their words as gospel. If we don't question the information we receive from bullshit artists to prove their thoughts and theories, we allow these falsehoods to take root in our memories and beliefs. This faulty data affects our decision making capabilities, sometimes resulting in regrettable life choices. But with a little dose of skepticism and a commitment to truth seeking, you can build your critical thinking and scientific reasoning skills to evaluate information, separate fact from fiction, and see through bullshitter spin. In *The Life-Changing Science of Detecting Bullshit*, experimental social psychologist John V. Petrocelli provides invaluable strategies not only to recognize and protect yourself from everyday bullshit, but to accept your own lack of knowledge about subjects and avoid in engaging in bullshit just for societal conformity. With real world examples from people versed in bullshit who work in the used car, real estate, wine, and diamond industries, Petrocelli exposes the red-flag warning signs found in the anecdotal stories, emotional language, and buzzwords used by bullshitters that persuade our decisions. By using his critical thinking defensive tactics against those motivated by profit, we will also learn how to stop the toxic misinformation spread from the social media influencers, fake news, and op-eds that permeate our culture and call out bullshit whenever we see it.

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Americans do not understand disabled ones. This book attempts to explain, to nondisabled people as well as to many disabled ones, how the world and self-perceptions of disabled people are changing. It looks at the rise of what is called the disability rights movement—the new thinking by disabled people that there is no pity or tragedy in disability and that it is society's myths, fears, and stereotypes that most make being disabled difficult.”—from the Introduction

syracuse university facilitated communication: In a Different Key John Donvan, Caren Zucker, 2016-01-19 PULITZER PRIZE FINALIST • NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER • “Sweeping in scope but with intimate personal stories, this is a deeply moving book about the history, science, and human drama of autism.”—Walter Isaacson, #1 New York Times bestselling author of *The Code Breaker* “Remarkable . . . A riveting tale about how a seemingly rare childhood disorder became a salient fixture in our cultural landscape.”—The Wall Street Journal (Ten Best Nonfiction Books of the Year) The inspiration for the PBS documentary, *In a Different Key* In 1938, Donald Triplett of Forest, Mississippi, became the first child diagnosed with autism. Beginning with his family's odyssey, *In a Different Key* tells the extraordinary story of this often misunderstood condition, from the civil rights battles waged by the families of those who have it to the fierce debates among scientists over how to define and treat it. Unfolding over decades, *In a Different Key* is a beautifully rendered history of people determined to secure a place in the world for those with autism—by liberating children from dank institutions, campaigning for their right to go to school, challenging expert opinion on what it means to have autism, and persuading society to accept those who are different. This is also a story of fierce controversies—from the question of whether there is truly an autism “epidemic,” and whether vaccines played a part in it; to scandals involving “facilitated communication,” one of many unsuccessful treatments; to stark disagreements about whether scientists should pursue a cure for autism; to compelling evidence that Hans Asperger, discoverer of the syndrome named after him, participated in the Nazi program that consigned disabled children to death. By turns intimate and panoramic, *In a Different Key* takes us on a journey from an era when families were shamed and children were condemned to institutions to one in which a cadre of people with autism push not simply for inclusion, but for a new understanding of autism: as difference rather than disability.

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the ways in which artists diagnosed with autism have constructed their identities through participation within art communities and cultures, and how the concept of self as 'story' can be utilized to better understand the neurological differences between autism and typical cognition. This book will be of particular interest to researchers and scholars within the fields of Disability Studies, Art Education, and Art Therapy.

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