J.R.H. 9
Joint resolution urging the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) to reconsider its opposition to the Rapid Prompting Method (RPM) of communication instruction for students with apraxia of speech (AOS) or autism

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Invited Speaker - Green Mountain Self-Advocates

April 9, 2026

Hello to the house human service committee.
I'm Kris Medina from Barre Town.
I work for Green Mountain Self-Advocates and I am Autistic.

I am passionate about working as a self-advocate and fighting for our rights.
J.R.H.9 is a huge deal to me and my typing friends here in Vermont because our means of communicating is life or death.

I really think we typers push ourselves to advocate for basic rights because people think we are not intelligent or capable of determining our needs.
I know what I need and I know what I want.
To have access to my preferred method of communication is like having access to fresh air and clean drinking water.

I attended Barre Town Elementary and Middle School where I was educated alongside my peers.
I am extremely lucky to have had typing in my life since second grade when I was introduced to facilitated communication also known as supported typing, which ASHA has also opposed.

With typing, all of my thoughts, needs, wants, and feelings that had been trapped inside my head came pouring out.
Having this newly found sense of myself, my life changed.
I now had the ability to truly communicate, to share what I knew, how I felt, and excel in academia through typing.

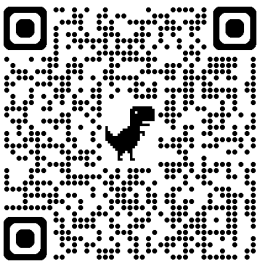
Disabled Vermonters are owed the freedom to live like every other Vermonter.
The state needs to prove that they care about vermonters with disabilities and prioritize communication choice.

One of my favorite quotes by Rosemary Crossley, who developed Facilitated Communication, is “Not being able to speak is not the same as having nothing to say.”
A lot of people believe that verbal speech is a showcase of the intelligence that people possess, holding onto the theory that if a person cannot speak using his or her own verbal speech, then he or she can’t possibly receive information to process and understand.
This way of thinking can be deadly to people’s growth personally, and intellectually it limits opportunity and decreases one’s overall quality of life.
I urge the legislature to see me as the fellow Vermonter that I am, and recognize typing as a legitimate way of communicating.

Resources

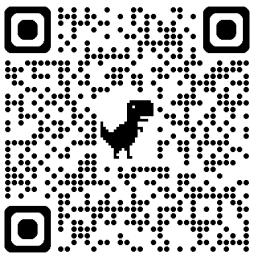
United for Communication Choice is a grassroots effort organized by individuals with disabilities, their families, and allies to defend and protect the human, civil, and legal rights of children and adults with disabilities to choose their most effective methods of communication.

The ASHA Position Statement on the Rapid Prompting Method (RPM), released August 8, 2018, made **five references to a study that was subsequently retracted.** Click **here** to learn more about the study. Click **here** to read our September 6, 2018 letter to ASHA expressing concerns about the ethical violations.



Vermont Communication Task Force (VCTF) is a statewide network created in 2000. The fundamental tenet of the Task Force is that all persons are competent, can communicate, and must receive the support, training and technology needed to actively participate in all aspects of life.

The Task Force provides information and training to transition age youth and adults with developmental disabilities, family members, educators, service providers and community members. The work is multifaceted, focusing on the individual (direct supports), local (agency) and state (systems) levels to provide resources, information and advocacy.



ASAN (Autistic Self Advocacy Network) ASHA did not develop its positions in collaboration with self-advocates. Notably, although ASHA permitted – and received – comments from non-speaking autistic

people, it failed to meaningfully engage with self-advocates or self-advocacy organizations during the process.

This failure is particularly grave in light of the fact that the position statements are highly likely to result in the denial of language-based communication to individuals who have no comparable and usable alternatives. It is irresponsible, inappropriate, and unjustifiable to develop policies that may affect the rights of non-speaking autistic people without meeting or collaborating closely and continuously with self-advocates.



A Selection of Peer-Reviewed Publications Supporting the Use of FC and RPM Despite assertions to the contrary, abundant peer-reviewed evidence exists to support the use of the Rapid Prompting Method (RPM), facilitated communication

(FC), and similar AAC teaching methodologies that are used to teach individuals who cannot rely primarily on speech to communicate by typing or pointing to letters on a letterboard.

Green Mountain Self-Advocates (GMSA) is for people with developmental disabilities to educate peers to take control over their own lives, make decisions, solve problems, and speak for themselves. gmsavt.org