

Telecommunications

Telecommunications is technology which allows you to communicate over a distance, for example, talk on the phone, send text messages, or make video calls (The Newell Network). It also includes the use of social media and emailing.

However, many people with sensory (hearing or vision) or complex communication needs might have difficulties accessing telecommunications. The following are some features in telecommunication devices that might help address these needs.

1. Low Vision / Blindness

- ◆ Text to speech
- ◆ Screen reading
- ◆ Speech recognition
- ◆ Adjustable user interfaces, e.g. grayscale, high contrast
- ◆ Braille telephones or mobile phones
- ◆ Braille Bluetooth keyboards, e.g. Brailiant (image to the right)



2. Dexterity

- ◆ On-screen keyboards
- ◆ Touch screen functions, e.g. adjust volume, assistive touch

3. Hearing

- ◆ Visual alerts, e.g. mobile phones with flashing light to alert person with hearing impairments that the phone is ringing
- ◆ Cochlear Implant Telephone Adaptor
- ◆ National Relay Service: A phone service for people who are deaf or have a hearing or speech impairment: www.relayservice.gov.au



Telecommunication Options

1. Telephones:



Traditional Landline Telephone



Telstra Big Button Multi Purpose Phone



Picture Caller ID Phone



CapTel Captioned Phone

2. Mobile Phones:



Regular Mobile Phones



EasyCall



Specialised Mobile Phones, e.g. OwnFone, KISA



Smart Phones

3. Mainstream Tablets/ Computers and Speech Generating Devices (SGDs):

These can be described as telecommunication tools when used for making calls, photo sharing, emailing, instant messaging, social media, and video conferencing.



Research

Research shows that for people with complex communication needs, using telecommunications has a significant positive impact as it:

- ◆ Helps with loneliness
- ◆ Increases their excitement and happiness
- ◆ Increases independence
- ◆ Helps in expressing their personality and humour
- ◆ Helps with keeping in contact with close and distant friends and family members
- ◆ Allows them more time to compose their messages

For more information, please contact:

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