

Reducing the Risk of Abuse for People with Complex Communication Needs.

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Research attests to the vulnerability for victimization for people who have disabilities and especially those who use augmentative and alternative communication. Victims who cannot communicate cannot prevent or report abuse and without access to the words they need to communicate people who use augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) cannot discuss, learn about, disclose or report issues relating to victimization. The best victim is the one that cannot tell or the one who tells and is not believed.

Pointing it Out: Safety for People who use AAC is an instructional DVD and booklet that builds on the findings of two major ACCPC projects: *Speak Up* and *Safety for People who have communication and mobility disabilities*. It contains a DVD and booklet wherein, eight adults who use AAC share their experiences, their views on safety and make recommendations to other people who use AAC, their families, teachers, service providers, attendants, legal professionals, police, victim services and counselors.

This workshop gives an overview of the safety issues for people who have complex communication disabilities, the safety tools and skills that people need to have and how we all can play a role in creating safer environments for this population.