



# The right to communication

**COMMUNICATION IS A** human right, described in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).

Communication is fundamental for all human beings. We need communication to interact, exchange information and ideas and also for building and maintaining relationships.

Our education and work depend on communication. It's also essential for participation in justice systems, political, and civic life.

**TO BE IN CHARGE** of our own lives we must have information presented to us in an accessible and a functioning way to express our opinions, feelings and needs.

For many persons on the autism spectrum, this is not a reality. There are many obstacles to full participation in the society.

The lack of accessible information and insufficient access to augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) methods prevents them from participating and expressing their desires and opinions.

It also prevents them from developing their talents and interests, establishing and maintaining relations and from having control over their own lives.

**TO ACHIEVE THESE** human rights also for persons on the autism spectrum there must be:

- more general knowledge about autism
- stronger legislation in our respective countries about the right to augmentative and alternative communication
- early intervention focussed on developing communication abilities in children
- autism specific competence enabling the delivery of an individually based support to persons with autism in life-span perspective.

**Autism- och Aspergerförbundet**

(Autism and Asperger Association in Sweden)

**Autismforeningen i Norge** (Autism Society Norway)

**Autismiliitto** (Autism Finland)

**Eesti Autismiliit** (Estonian Autism Alliance)

**Einhverfusamtökin** (The Icelandic Autistic Society)

**Landsforeningen Autisme** (Autism Denmark)

**Latvias Autisma Apvieniba** (Latvian Autism Association)

**Lietuvos Autizmo Asociacija "Lietaus vaikai"**

(Lithuanian Autism Association)