



SCEDP Success

Program Works with Speech Language Pathologist to Provide Communication Devices to Children

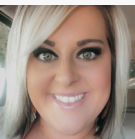
SCEDP | South Carolina Equipment Distribution Program

The following testimonial was provided to SCEDP by Marley Costin, a speech language pathologist in Columbia, SC.

As a speech pathologist I use every resource available to help non-verbal children, and technology like iPads are often integral to give children who can't talk a voice and bridge the gap to speech.

Not everyone who needs an iPad can afford one, however. And while many children get iPads through school, they have to return them when school is out and those devices often get cleared from time to time by the districts, erasing all the individual programs and therapy work exercises the child has done.

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Marley Costin
Speech Language Pathologist
Columbia Speaks, LLC

When I learned of the SCEDP program that allowed qualified children and their families to receive an iPad at no cost, it was almost too good to be true. I called the office and spoke to Casi Sims who listened to all my questions, was ready to help, and sent us applications.

Within a day or two I had an envelope filled with applications. Casi talked to me as the provider to prep the family on what they'd need to submit. We did our part, the family did their part, and we sent it off. Within a couple of months, they had an iPad on their front doorstep.

For children who need them to speak, the iPads are their voice. I've had four children who benefitted from the program and are fully verbal now. If not for those devices, those kids wouldn't have had a shot.

These kids are super-bright, but there's something in their expressive language of the brain that doesn't fire. A lot of children with autism have the ability to imitate what they hear. With augmentative alternative communication, devices like an iPad can model the word; students hear it, and they can repeat it. So over time, modeling those words and imitating them, they end up speaking functionally without it. We fade the iPad away so they can speak more independently.

It really opens up their whole world, and whether it's verbal or not, it's communication.

At first, it's like the iPad is speaking for them, but really it's bridging them to communication. We go from nouns to people in their family, we upload pictures, people they love and need, and those things are super motivating.

The kids learn that there is a cause and effect when we make sound, and things happen when they speak. So it's a bridge. For some, they will always be non-verbal, so it is their voice. I have children who cannot speak a single word but can put together six- and seven-word sentences on an iPad.

For those parents, it's life-changing. It's a glimpse into their child's world, and the children go from not being able to communicate to being able to finally talk to their

parents...just things like "I want more milk please." They could never say that before. So it really opens up their whole world, and whether it's verbal or not, it's communication.

These families have waited for hope for so long. This program is something I can utilize with families to help them, and I have shared Casi's information with several therapists I know who have used the program. I'd encourage anyone who works in this field or knows a child or family who could benefit to take advantage of it. It can truly change a child's life forever.

The SCEDP iPad Program

The iPad tablet is available to those with moderate-to-severe hearing loss and/or speech challenges. Helpful apps are installed based on communication needs. The iPad does require Wi-Fi internet to utilize the apps.

Communication apps for the iPad include:

- Video Relay services
- IP Relay services
- Captioned telephone services
- One Alternative Augmentative Communication (AAC) that is selected by the professional certifier



Requests for an iPad must come from a Speech Language Pathologist. To request an application, contact SCEDP by phone or email.



About SCEDP

The South Carolina Equipment Distribution Program (SCEDP) is administered by the Office of Regulatory Staff. SCEDP serves South Carolina residents who have a hearing or speech challenge. The program distributes no-cost equipment to assist with communication over the phone. The equipment in the program includes enhanced phones and alerting devices. People who qualify for the program are provided equipment to use as long as they remain in the state and have active phone service.

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