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SpeakUp Author Guidelines

SpeakUp's Objective -- In the spirit of the USSAAC mission, SpeakUp seeks to:

- enhance the lives of people who use AAC
- support the augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) community
- share information and resources
- represent the diverse perspectives of all AAC stakeholders

Authors – Contributing guest articles is a member benefit. It is limited to USSAAC members, EXCEPT where articles are requested by invitation of a Board or Editorial Committee member.

Topics – SpeakUP will accomplish its mission by including articles that address one of the following areas:

- AAC Strategies & Resources
- Advocacy & Funding
- Firsthand AAC Perspectives
- Research in AAC
- Twitter Chat Follow-up
- Webinar Follow-up

Note: Articles may not be a promotion and/or advertisement about products.
Articles related to “Research in AAC” will also require approval by the Ethics & Education Committee.

Audience – SpeakUp is available to USSAAC members and guests to the USSAAC website. Our community includes people who can benefit from AAC, people who use AAC, family members, professionals from multiple disciplines, students, and AAC-related companies and institutions.

Length –

- SpeakUp does not have a minimum or maximum length requirement.
- Articles should be long enough to cover the topic.
- Articles should be short enough to maintain reader interest.

Format –

- Break up content so people can easily scan the article.
- Use headings, bullet points, and spacing.
- Highlight or emphasize key terms.
- Include an introduction, a body, and a conclusion.

Best Practice Guidelines –

- Be thoughtful and respectful of how other others may be affected.
- Be accurate and provide support for your position. Include any references at the end of the article.
- Ensure privacy. Articles must comply with relevant provisions of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (“HIPAA”) or the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (“FERPA”).

Language –

- Consider using [people-first language](#). Refer to the person first followed by the disability (e.g., a person with Aphasia as opposed to stroke victim).
- Minimize the use of abbreviations, acronyms, legal terms, jargon or lingo. If necessary to your article, please define them or provide an example.
- Describe, rather than specify product names and/or companies (e.g., 12” eye gaze device). Individual considerations will be given to articles in which including the specific device and/or product name or company is essential to the content of the article.
- Consider using [Plain English](#) to make your article accessible to as many people as possible.

Photos & Videos – Please include photos or other graphics to enhance the visual appeal of your article. Photos can be uploaded using the SpeakUp Guest Author Form. Photos may also be uploaded to a separate site (e.g., Flickr), in which case, please provide the link. **Files must be less than 1 MB in size.** When submitting pictures and/or videos, please provide the following:

- A signed [Photo Release](#) for each individual pictured.
- References for photo(s) or graphic(s) used (e.g., photo by Sam Smith).
- A caption or alternative text for each graphic or photo submitted.

External Links – All external links will be checked for appropriateness and considered on an individual basis.

Disclosures – Each guest author is required to make a disclosure statement about his or her financial and non-financial relationships, as it relates to the article. If you do not have any relationships to the article, please indicate “none”.

- Financial relationships are those through which the individual may have a personal financial interest to the article. Examples include a salary, royalty, intellectual property rights, gift, consulting fee, honorarium, ownership interest (e.g., stocks, stock options) or other financial benefit. Financial relationships may also include "contracted research" in which the institution obtains the grant and manages the funds and the individual serves as the principal or named investigator.
- Nonfinancial relationships are those relationships—including personal, professional, political, institutional, religious, or other—that might bias an individual.

Submitting an Article –

- Complete the SpeakUp Guest Author Form, available on the USSAAC website. It is available as a [SpeakUP Google Form](#) or a pdf version.
- The SpeakUp editorial team will review submitted articles. A member of the team will contact the author via email for discussion of final edits. Following the discussion, the author and/or USSAAC may retain the rights to the article.
- It may take up to 90-days for accepted articles to be available on SpeakUp. Once posted the article will be shared on USSAAC’s social media avenues.

Need help or have questions? Contact membership@ussaac.org.