

New technology helps non-verbal boy speak with his eyes

There are people working across the globe at all hours of the day to find cures for debilitating conditions or come up with new tools to help those who live with disabilities be able to participate more fully in life. Products like the wheelchair and prosthetic limbs have completely changed our concept of what is possible. Today, we would like to share the story of an 11-year-old boy who lives with cerebral palsy and has found a way to communicate despite not being able to speak.

After trying out several communication tools that were operated by foot or hand, the California boy, who lacks some motor control, would quickly become tired and frustrated. That's when he and his parents decided to try out the Tobii C12, which allows a person to use his or her eyes to control a cursor on a screen. After typing out thoughts, a voice says them out loud.

Although it took the boy several months to become used to it, when he did, he was able to begin actively participating in conversations not only at home, but also in the classroom and elsewhere. Most recently, the sixth-grader spoke at conference on enabling people with disabilities. He has also communicated with the makers of the Tobii about what's working and what needs improvement.

A story like this is always uplifting, but it is important to remember that achievements like this often happen after a lot of time, energy and money has been spent. While many people in Philadelphia have the perseverance to master new technology like the Tobii, not everyone has the money it takes to purchase such equipment. For this reason, it may be beneficial

to consider applying for [Supplemental Security Income](#), which provides financial assistance to adults or children who live with serious disabilities.

Source: The Beach Reporter, "Eye gaze technology gives a voice to non-verbal speaker," Charles Pannunzio, April 3, 2014