

# BACK TO SCHOOL

## Charity offers iPads to give children a voice

For children with speech or motor skill impairments, an iPad provides more than a way to play games or watch movies. With specialized apps that help non-verbal children learn to communicate, iPads can give kids without voices the opportunity to be heard.

Take Waverley Leduc for example, an 11-year-old girl living with Rett syndrome. Without her iPad, Waverley can't tell her friends what she did on the weekend, or tell a waiter what she wants in a restaurant, and she can't ask a teacher a question in school.

Waverley first received an iPad from President's Choice Children's Charity four years ago through a national program that has donated hundreds of iPads to children across the country. According to her mother Colleen, receiving this gift has been life changing. "Without it, Waverley wouldn't be able to say what she wants to say."

While iPads are not the first available communication aid on the market, parents say that

the devices have a leg up on traditional models in that they are small, easy to use and generally lack the social stigma attached to older options.

Using specialized communication software



Proloquo2go, Waverley can express herself using visual aids or choose symbols to put together a sentence spoken out loud in a young girl's voice. Earlier this year, Waverley even used her iPad to deliver an award-winning presentation at the regional heritage

fair—something her mother never would have imagined.

"It makes me excited about Waverley's future, having a device like this", says Colleen. When asked about her experience with the iPad, another mother said, "We want our daughter to reach her full potential, whatever that may be, and we count ourselves lucky to know there are charities like the Children's Rehab Foundation and President's Choice Children's Charity behind us every step of the way."

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