



## Transcript of iCanConnect Video

May 21, 2015

Hi. I'm Eddie Martinez, Junior, Deaf-Blind Coordinator with the Columbia Lighthouse for the Blind.

The iCanConnect program distributes equipment to low-income people who are both deaf and blind make phone calls, use relay services, send e-mail and text messages, and access the Internet. The program distributes a wide range of equipment to meet the specific needs the individuals it serves. This equipment can cost thousands of dollars, like some of the Braille devices shown in this video, which can cost up to \$6,000 each. I use these devices. I also train other people how to use these devices or other equipment they receive through the program.

To better understand how I use these Braille devices, it helps to understand a little about Braille. Braille is a coded system for tactilely representing English. It is composed of cells, each of which contains six dots. Different configurations of dots represent different letters and, in the case of contracted Braille, words.

Refreshable Braille displays connect to a variety of devices to render the content on their screens in Braille. This is possible by using screen reader technologies, like JAWS for PC or voiceover for Mac, to navigate the on screen content and tell the refreshable Braille display what to render. The Braille display then actuates the appropriate pins in each cell and waits for the user to prompt to continue. You can also code directly into Braille through the refreshable display, which is especially useful with devices that don't have a physical keyboard.

Most Braille displays can connect either via Bluetooth or USB, and vary from small 12 cell devices to 80 cell devices, all the way up to the Braille Sense U2, a fully Braille computer incorporating social media, web browsing, and email features, and with no need for a separate computer or phone. More cells can mean less frustration for the user advancing the text, but also makes for a less portable device.

Through iCanConnect, people who are deaf-blind can stay connected with family, friends, and their communities. For more information, please visit: [www.iCanConnect.org](http://www.iCanConnect.org).

