

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

Assistive Technology (AT) is very much a dynamic, interdisciplinary team process, which must be individualized to each student based on current performance and needs. Remember to consider AT on every IEP. Collaborate and work together as an IEP team to document AT use and trial periods.

<u>DO</u>	<u>DON'T</u>
Begin with assessment and present levels of performance in all domains	Put a specific device or system first
Design goals and objectives, based on the present levels and CONSIDER if any AT would be appropriate in order for the student to meet his/her goals	Write goals merely based on a device or system. The AT is the TOOL to help attain the goals
Develop an action plan for each appropriate IEP team member if a trial of a system or device is agreed upon. Also agree upon how documentation will be collected and when it will be reviewed	Leave the IEP meeting without a clear plan in place for documentation and timelines
Begin with the "least restrictive" intervention first	Begin with a laptop if a pencil grip will work. This is <i>not</i> about saving money but more about doing the "least" first and not adding AT that is not necessary or may make the student feel different
Conduct a trial and include the consumer whenever possible	Purchase a device without really researching the features and assume that the student will automatically want to use it
Consider the individual's present levels and the diagnosis as appropriate to the individual student's profile but stick to the student's individual goals and current needs	Assume that all students with the same diagnosis need the same AT
Train staff, family members and all who would interact with the student using the device or system on the specific features including programming etc.	Assume that a school system will program or use device or system just because one has been purchased

Have a “low-tech” backup for all “high- tech” AT applications	Rely solely on a “high-tech” system. There will inevitably be times where devices/systems break down, need repair etc. The individual will still need AT in place in order to participate and meet his/her goals
Try and try and try again. Modify, adapt, individualize, etc.	Give up! Be sure to document progress and make changes based upon individual student needs. Remember AT that was once considered ineffective may be worth revisiting at a later date based on the readiness of the student 94
Work as a team for consideration of AT across settings, activities and people	View AT as an isolated therapy or activity. Keep function first. For example, picture communication systems should not be used only in speech therapy. Repetition in variety of environments is critical
Get creative!	Rely solely on catalogs for purchasing AT items and systems
Consider the present levels of performance and the goals/objectives on the IEP regarding specific AT use	Merely write down that the campus has a computer lab and that the classroom has calculators
Have a stash of batteries, chargers etc. based on the AT in use	Forget the juice! The AT is effective only if it is working. This may fall into an IEP team action plan for roles and responsibilities regarding obtaining batteries etc. and who is responsible for charging the device
Consider AT vendors and companies as “experts” in their specific devices and systems. Contact them for product information, customer service, trainings etc.	Conduct an AT evaluation with a specific vendor representing one product/line. This is never advisable
Conduct an AT evaluation as much as possible in the natural environment. AT trials should also occur in the environment where the student would be accessing the device/systems. An AT evaluation should be an interdisciplinary process and include all the appropriate IEP team members	Use one isolated evaluation session as completely diagnostic of all AT considerations. A clinic-based evaluation can certainly provide valuable information and directions for IEP teams. However, the use and trial of AT should be conducted in the natural environment along with data collection regarding effectiveness of the AT use

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY CHECKLIST EXAMPLES OF ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

California Department of Education

Note: This list is intended to provide examples of assistive technology and should not be misconstrued as a mandate for payment by any agency, including: local education agencies, California Children's Services, the California Departments of Rehabilitation, Developmental Services, or Education.

Writing

- Mechanics of Writing
- Pencil/pen with adaptive grip
- Adapted paper (e.g., raised line, highlighted lines)
- Slant board
- Typewriter
- Portable word processor
- Computer
- Other _____

Alternate Computer Access

- Keyboard with easy access
- Key guard
- Arm support
- Track ball/track pad/joystick with on screen keyboard
- Alternate keyboard
- Mouth stick/head pointer with standard/alternate keyboard
- Head mouse/head master/tracker with on screen keyboard
- Switch with Morse code
- Switch with scanning
- Voice recognition software
- Word prediction to reduce keystrokes
- Other _____

Composing Written Material

- Word cards/word book/word wall
- Pocket dictionary/thesaurus

- Electronic/talking electronic dictionary/thesaurus/spell checker
- Word processor with spell checker/grammar checker
- Word processor with word prediction to facilitate spelling and sentence construction
- Talking word processor for multisensory typing
- Voice recognition software
- Multimedia software for expression of ideas (assignments)
- Other _____

Reading, Studying and Math

Reading

- Changes in text size, spacing, color, background color
- Use of pictures with text
- Book adapted for page turning (e.g., page fluffers, 3-ring binder)
- Talking electronic device to pronounce challenging words
- Scanner with talking word processor
- Electronic books
- Other _____

Learning/Studying

- Print or picture schedule
- Low tech aids to find materials (e.g., index tabs, color coded folders)
- Highlight text (e.g., markers, highlight tape, ruler, etc.)
- Voice output reminders for assignments, steps of task, etc.
- Software for manipulation of objects/concept development input device (e.g., switch, touch window)
- Software for organization of ideas and studying
- Recorded material (e.g., books on tape, taped lectures with number coded index)
- Other _____

Math

- Abacus/math line
- Calculator/calculator with print out
- Talking calculator
- Calculator with large keys and/or large LCD print out

- On screen calculator

Software with templates for math computation (may use adapted input methods)

- Tactile/voice output measuring devices (e.g., clock, ruler)
 Other _____

Communication

- Communication board/book with pictures/objects/letters/words
 Eye gaze board (eye gaze communication)
 Simple voice output device
 Voice output device with levels
 Device with speech synthesis for typing
 Other _____

Activities of Daily Living (ADL)

- Adaptive eating devices (e.g., foam handle on utensil)
 Adaptive drinking devices (e.g., cup with cut out rim)
 Adaptive dressing equipment (e.g., button hook, reacher)
 Other _____

Mobility

- Walker
 Grab rails
 Manual wheelchair
 Powered mobility toy
 Powered wheelchair with joystick, head switch or sip/puff control
 Other _____

Environmental Control

- Light switch extension
 Use of universal link and switch to turn on electrical appliances (e.g., radio, fan, blender)
 Radio/ultra sound/remote controlled appliances
 Other _____

Recreation and Leisure

Adapted toys and games (e.g., toy with adaptive handle)

- Use of battery interrupter and switch to operate a toy
- Adaptive sporting equipment (e.g., lighted/bell ball, velcro mitt)
- Universal cuff to hold crayons, markers, paint brush
- Modified utensils (e.g., rollers, stampers, scissors)
- Arm rest to support arm for drawing/painting
- Drawing/graphic program on computer
- Playing games on the computer
- Music software on computer
- Other _____

Vision

- Eye glasses
- Magnifier
- Large print books
- Screen magnifier (mounted over screen)
- Screen color cornets
- Screen magnification software
- CCTV (closed-circuit television)
- Screen reader
- Braille keyboard and note taker
- Braille translation software
- Braille printer
- Other _____

Hearing

- Hearing aid
- Classroom amplification
- Captioning
- Signaling device (e.g., vibrating pager)
- TDD/TTY for phone access
- Screen flash for alert signals on computer
- Other _____

Positioning and Seating

- Non-slip surface on chair to prevent slipping
- Bolster, rolled towel, blocks for feet
- Adapted/alternate chair, side lyer, stander
- Custom fitted wheelchair or insert
- Other _____