Assistive Technology: What Is It & How to Use It

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Welcome

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Livestream Tips

Volume
• The default volume in Livestream is set at 50%.
  • If you are having difficulties with sound, try increasing the volume.
• Use headsets to improve sound experience.
Livestream Tips

**Event posts** include:
- Messages
- Links to handouts
- A link to evaluation at the end of the workshop

If you are having technical difficulties, use the chat window to send a message. You can also use the chat window to send comments and questions.

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PACER has programs for children and adults with all types of disabilities, as well as their parents, families, and professionals that work with them.
The Simon Technology Center (STC) is dedicated to making the benefits of technology more accessible to children and adults with disabilities.

Services:
- Information & Referral
- Lending Library
- Free Consultations
- Individualized Trainings
- Workshops & In-services
- Special Projects

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Where to Find the STC Online?

PACER Center Facebook Page
• http://www.facebook.com/PACERCenter

Pinterest
• http://pinterest.com/simontechcenter

YouTube
• www.youtube.com/pacercenter
  • Or search Simon Technology Center

• MyTurn – STC Lending Library Inventory
  • https://stclendinglibrary.myturn.com/library/inventory/browse

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Today’s Agenda

- PACER Center and the Simon Technology Center
- What is assistive technology (AT)?
- Categories and examples of AT
- Consideration process of AT
- Extra resources
Assistive Technology

Devices

Services

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Assistive Technology Device

Any item, piece of equipment, or product system
- purchased commercially off the shelf
- modified
- customized

Used to
- increase
- maintain
- improve functional capabilities of a student with a disability

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The AT Continuum

- **No Tech**: Simple Modifications Without Technology
- **Low Tech**: Less Sophisticated Affordable Tools
- **Medium Tech**: Relatively complex Electronic Devices
- **High Tech**: Advanced May Incorporate Computers

[www.CTDInstitute.org](http://www.CTDInstitute.org)
Assistive Technology Service

• Selection
  — Information and Referral
  — Evaluation Services

• Acquisition
  — Services to Locate Funding
  — Information and Referral

• Use
  — Trainings
  — Technical Support Services

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Trends in Assistive Technology

AT Trends:
• Small
• Portable
• Mainstream

The Challenge:
• Readily available
• Multiple platforms
• Mobile technology
• Expanded options
Assistive Technology Categories

- Daily Living Aids
- Mobility & Positioning
- Recreation & Sports
- Environmental Controls
- Sensory Aids
- Vision & Hearing
- Alternative Access
- Communication
- Academics
Daily Living Aids

- Feeding and eating aids
- Dressing and grooming aids
- Executive function aids
- Fine motor development aids
Mobility and Positioning

- Wheelchair
- Gait trainer
- Walker
- Positioning aids
- Stander

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Recreation

Adapted art
Adapted toys
Adapted play

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Environmental Controls

- Control access:
  - Direct, voice, switch, remote, and eye gaze
- Wired and wireless
- Automated controls
- Mobile device controls
Sensory Aids

- Tactile toys and fidgets
- Auditory stimulation
- Visual stimulation
- Deep pressure & weighted items
Vision & Hearing

- Magnifiers
- Screen Readers
- Refreshable Braille display
- Captioning
- Personal amplifiers
Alternative Access

- Access Methods:
  - Direct, voice, switch, remote, and eye gaze
- Alternative keyboards and mice

[Images of various assistive technology devices]
Communication

- Picture symbols
- Single message devices
- Mid-tech voice output devices
- High-tech voice output apps and devices
Academics

- Adapted and/or accessible books
- Adapted paper
- Adapted writing tools and grips
- Math manipulatives

- Word prediction
- Text to speech
- Speech to text
Consideration of AT
Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

IDEA ..... 

- is the federal special education law that addresses services for kids with disabilities.
- requires that AT devices and services be **CONSIDERED** for students with disabilities to provide FAPE (free, appropriate public education).
  - Consideration is not defined by law
  - Brief process during each annual IFSP/IEP meeting.

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What is an IEP?

- Outlines Sp. Ed. and related services
- Based on information gathered in evaluations, assessments, and current levels of achievement.
  - Written by IEP team
- Provides a written record of decisions made at IEP meetings.
- Reviewed annually

**IFSP vs. IEP**

- Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP), ages birth - 2 years
- Individualized Education Plan (IEP), ages 3 to 21
The Process of Consideration

The process for considering AT does not begin with selecting the AT tool so we shouldn’t either.
SETT Framework

Student
Environment
Tasks
Tools

Created by Joy Zabala
http://www.joyzabala.com/Documents.html

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Child-Centered AT Plan

AT Consideration Flow Chart
  • Visual planning guide

Child-Centered AT Plan
  • Documentation guide

Expanded Child-Centered AT Plan
  • Comprehensive documentation guide

http://www.pacer.org/stc/tikes/including-at-in-school.asp
**Assistive Technology (AT) Consideration Flowchart (IEP)**

Is the student making adequate progress on annual goals, in the general education curriculum, and participating in the least restrictive environment?

- **Yes**
- **No**

Is the student currently using AT?

- **No.** AT was considered and is not needed at this time.
- **Yes.** The student is successfully using AT.

Does the IEP team have enough information to determine appropriate AT based on the student's needs?

- **Yes.** The team has identified that the student needs assistive technology and has enough information to make decisions about specific AT.
- **No.** The student needs assistive technology but the team needs information to determine the type of AT that would meet the needs of the student.

- Document that AT was considered and is not necessary at this time.
- Document the need for AT in the IEP.
- Document by using the “First Possible Outcome of the Child-Centered AT Plan.”
- Document what AT will be used and how you have tried or will try different technology to meet the student's needs.
- Document by using the “Second Possible Outcome of the Child-Centered AT Plan.”
- Document that more information is needed and explain how the team will gather this information.
- Document by using the “Fourth Possible Outcome of the Child-Centered AT Plan.” Teams that are new to AT, or new to working with students with complex needs, may benefit from using the “Expanded Child-Centered AT Plan.”
- Document by using the “Third Possible Outcome of the Child-Centered AT Plan.”

**NOTE:** AT can and should be revisited annually or as often as necessary because needs may change over time. Ask your district administrators for specific information about where to document consideration. This is often documented in the modification section of an IEP.

**Color Key:** Orange: Questions to ask. Blue: Possible outcomes. Purple: Action items.

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Child-Centered Assistive Technology (AT) Plan (IEP)

Child: ______________________ Parent(s)/Guardian(s): ______________________
Case Manager: ______________________ Date: ______________________

Consideration of assistive technology (AT) is the process in which the child’s Individualized Education Program (IEP) team discusses the need for AT. As the team thinks about the child, his or her strengths, and his or her needs, use this two-page plan to document one of four possible outcomes when discussing assistive technology. Note: You only need to select one outcome.

Child’s Strengths:

Child’s Needs:

1. Including AT — First Possible Outcome: AT was considered and is not needed at this time.

Write below how current accommodations and modifications are meeting the needs of the child.

Write something like the following in the IEP, either in the designated section or other appropriate place such as accommodations and modifications:

• The team has discussed the child’s needs and determined that he or she does not need assistive technology because (fill in how current accommodations and modifications are meeting his or her needs.)

2. Including AT — Second Possible Outcome: The child is successfully using assistive technology. AT is necessary to meet specific IEP goals.

The child is successfully using AT. Document how the child is currently using AT in his or her educational environment.

Write something like the following statement into the IEP, either in the designated section or other appropriate place such as accommodations and modifications:

• The child is currently using AT. He or she will use assistive technology to help him or her reach the following IEP goals and objectives: (Briefly point to the goals and objectives where assistive technology will help.)
3. Including AT—Third Possible Outcome: The team has determined that the child needs assistive technology and has enough information to make decisions about specific AT.

The child is not yet using AT and the team has determined that the child needs AT. Write how you have tried or will try different technology to meet the child’s needs.

Write something like the following statement into the IEP, either in the designated section or other appropriate place such as accommodations and modifications:

- The team has discussed the child’s needs and determined that he or she does need assistive technology. He or she will use assistive technology to help him or her reach the following IEP goals and objectives ( Briefly point to the goals and objectives where assistive technology will help.)

4. Including AT—Fourth Possible Outcome: The child needs assistive technology but the team needs information to determine the type of AT that would meet the needs of the child.

Document the different technology you would like to try or how you will gather the information you need to make an informed decision about assistive technology and how it may help this child.

*For this option you may want to utilize the TIKES® “Expanded Child-Centered AT Plan (IEP)” for more detailed support of the AT Consideration Process

Area(s) in which the student is experiencing difficulty completing educational activities or meeting goals:

- Activities of Daily Living
- Early Literacy
- Mechanics of Writing
- Seating & Positioning
- Cognitive
- Early Math Concepts
- Orientation & Mobility
- Sensory
- Communication
- Environmental Control
- Play
- Vision
- Computer & Tablet Access
- Focus/Attention
- Recreation/Leisure Functioning
- Other Area(s):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Environment(s)</th>
<th>Educational Activity</th>
<th>Tools to Consider</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Write something like the following statement in the IEP, either in the designated section or other appropriate place such as accommodations and modifications:

- The team has discussed the child’s needs and determined that we need more information. The team will try different technology to determine what will best meet the child’s needs. We will try (list the features of the devices you think will benefit the child) and meet again with more information. (Document the amount of time you will need to try the technology and when you will meet to discuss it. Also assign roles so there is clear communication about roles and responsibilities.)

Action Items:

- Date and check when you have completed the following:
- [ ] Date need for AT was documented in the IEP.
- [ ] Information written in the IEP is consistent with our AT decision. (For example, a visual strategy, a common early childhood AT, is appropriately identified as assistive technology throughout document.)

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Expanded Child-Centered AT Plan: IFSP and IEP

- Current AT use
- Areas of need
- Trying AT
- Training
- Set-up and maintenance
- Back-up plan
- AT roles
- Documenting AT decisions
- Action items
Everyone’s Responsibility

• Everyone on the team has something important to contribute to the conversation about assistive technology
• AT is everyone’s responsibility
AT Assessments

What is an AT assessment?
Assessment or evaluation is the formal process of determining what AT devices and services will assist the student in meeting educational goals.

When is an AT assessment needed?
• At any time when the parent or student (if over 18) requests an evaluation in writing
• If the team cannot identify devices or strategies to assist the student in meeting educational goals
• If equipment trials are inconclusive
AT Assessments

Who conducts an AT assessment?
Individuals with knowledge of both the student, and the types of AT to meet identified needs:
- Free Consultations
- Schools
- Fee-based Organizations

Partial listing of Minnesota AT web resources:
Loan Programs

Utilize districts lending closets, outside organizations lending libraries, and vendors for loan devices.

MN STAR Program
- State AT Act Program
- Oversees 5 lending libraries in Minnesota
- https://mn.gov/admin/star/
AT Reuse

- Buy and Sell Facebook Group for used assistive technology
- Search FB for: MN Special Needs Equipment for Sale
- http://tinyurl.com/MNATBuy-Sell
Presuming Competence

Leads to:

• Fulfilled potential
• Access to education, communication, experience, and opportunity
• Learning and growth
• Limitless possibilities
High Expectations
Resources for SETT

*Using the SETT Framework to Level the Learning Field for Students with Disabilities*

*SETT Scaffold for Gathering Data*

Additional Handouts:
- www.joyzabala.com/Documents.html
- www.joyzabala.com/Handouts_for_Download.html

Additional Resources:
- “The SETT Framework for Consideration of AT,” a video developed by MDE, can be requested by calling Kursten Dubbels at 651-582-8562

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Resources for Child-Centered AT Plan

Early Childhood (IFSP & IEP) versions:
http://www.pacer.org/stc/tikes/including-at-in-school.asp

Kindergarten to age 21 versions:
http://www.pacer.org/stc/publications.asp (under “Handouts”)

www.CTDInstitute.org
Resources

Simon Technology Center (simontechcenter)
- http://pinterest.com/simontechcenter

PACER Center STC TIKES Project
- www.pinterest.com/pacertikes
Questions & Wrap Up

• Questions?
• For more information on AT tools or services, contact the Simon Technology Center at PACER:
  • Call 952-838-9000
  • Email stc@pacer.org
  • Visit: http://www.pacer.org/stc/
We want to hear from you!

At the end of the webinar, please fill out the brief survey.

Located under event posts (box with an arrow in it)

When you complete your survey, a certificate of completion will appear.

If you experience any difficulties send an email to stc@pacer.org.

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