

What is "Assistive Technology"????

"Assistive Technology", or "AT" is the term we use to describe equipment/services/strategies used by persons with disabilities to access tasks, equipment and/or places in the environment that are otherwise inaccessible. Assistive Technology includes a full range of solutions such as:

- "low tech" supports like Velcro, stickers, reading or writing guides
- "light tech" supports: digital recorders and simple electronic notetaking devices
- "high tech" supports: adaptive software products, refreshable Braille, high tech wheelchairs and environmental control devices.

Three basic laws address assistive technology in education, employment, government, business and general applications. These laws are: the ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act), IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) and the Rehabilitation Act. All three laws adopt the following definitions of AT:

Federal Definition:

"Assistive Technology Device" is defined as "any item, piece of equipment, or product system whether acquired commercially off the shelf, modified or customized, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities."

Federal Definition:

"Assistive Technology Service" means any service that directly assists an individual with a disability in the selection, acquisition, or use of an assistive technology device.



Examples:

For Persons with Ergonomic or other Physical Access needs:

- Power door openers, adapted pens, adapted utensils, ergonomic seating, speech recognition

For Persons who are Blind or Visually Impaired:

- Hand held magnification devices, screen magnification software, CCTV, screenreading software

For Persons who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing:

- amplification devices such as Hearing Aids, FM systems, Amplified Phones, Video Phones, TTY

For Persons with Cognitive Challenges:

- Text Reading software, FM Systems or various organizational tools

Resources:

The following pages list agencies, organizations and Assistive Technology Specialists who can help identify AT solutions to access barriers for persons at work, home, or school. Inclusion on any list does not constitute endorsement, and omission from any list only constitutes oversight. Criteria for inclusion on the following lists is a self identified commitment to the provision of Assistive Technology (AT) services, devices or other supports for persons with disabilities.