

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY IN EARLY INTERVENTION

Did you know that...



Assistive technology (AT) for infants and toddlers is defined as any item that helps increase the independence and functioning of a child. AT can help with positioning and mobility, communication, play and interaction, learning, and self help. It includes a wide range of items from simple adaptations such as utensils with built-up handles to more sophisticated devices such as wheelchairs, standers, communication devices, and many more. Assistive technology can even include toys purchased at local stores that are adapted to help children with disabilities play more independently and participate in daily routines.

Assistive technology may also be any service that assists children and their families select, acquire, and implement appropriate adapted equipment. These services include assessment for and selection of AT, and training once the technology is acquired.

Research is showing that use of AT with young children can contribute to improving self esteem, reducing child and adult frustration, and enabling independence and participation in daily life. In addition, AT can change the expectations of others for a child's abilities, and enable active rather than passive play, which is crucial to child development.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act identifies assistive technology as one of the 14 early intervention services that children age birth through two are entitled to receive. That means all children who qualify for early intervention services are eligible for AT services, along with OT, PT, SLP, etc. AT can enhance the major areas of development that include cognitive, social-emotional, communication and sensorimotor domains.



Did you know that...

- Assistive technology in early intervention is significantly underutilized.
- AT is documented on fewer than 4% of IFSP's in Colorado and 3.1% of IFSP's nationally.
- A national survey of almost 1,000 EI providers revealed that almost half felt that none or few of the children they served were receiving the AT services and devices they required.
- Many young children who need AT do not receive it until they are at least two years of age.



Common myths that prevent infants and toddlers from receiving appropriate AT services include:

- **Myth:** The use of an AT device can act as a deterrent to a child's ability to develop typical skills.
Fact: Research actually shows the opposite to be true.
- **Myth:** Infants and toddlers are either too young to benefit from AT or need certain "readiness skills" before they can use it.
Fact: Even very young children can benefit from AT that is properly matched to their needs and abilities with no prerequisite skills.
- **Myth:** AT is high-tech and complex or is too expensive.

Fact: AT for infants and toddlers is often simple or low-tech. Numerous [funding sources](#) are available for all AT devices and services.

Where do I get AT services in Colorado?

- Assistive Technology Partners
www.assistivetechologypartners.edu
303-315-1280
1-800-255-3477
- Children's Hospital Colorado Audiology & Speech Pathology Department
www.childrenscolorado.org
720-777-6250
- Children's Hospital Colorado Occupational Therapy Department Assistive Technology Clinic
www.childrenscolorado.org
720-777-6633
- Early Intervention Colorado Community Centered Board System
www.earlyinterventionincolorado.org
1-888-777-4041
- SWAAAC – Assistive Technology Teams for local public school districts
www.swaaac.com
303-315-1276

Resources

The Alliance for Technology Access

www.ataccess.org/ -

“ResourceHUB/Publications”

Information on how to adapt toys and play for children with disabilities

Assistive Technology Partners’ Tech for Tykes Program

www.techfortykes.org

Comprehensive resources on assistive technology services, research and resources for young children

Assistive Technology Partners

Southeast Technical Assistance Center (SETAC)

4825 Lorna Place

Colorado Springs, CO 80915

www.assistivetechologypartners.org

719.380.6229

Assistive Technology Partners

Western Slope Technical Assistance Center (WesTAC)

Mesa County Workforce Center

2897 North Avenue, Modular 3A

Grand Junction, CO 81501

www.assistivetechologypartners.org

The Center for Best Practices in Early Childhood Education – Early Childhood Technology Integrated Instructional System

www.wiu.edu/ectiis/

Online learning system for AT in early childhood

Closing the Gap

www.closingthegap.com

507-248-3294

Multiple resources about AT for all ages

Let’s Play Project

www.letsplay.buffalo.edu

Project out of the University of Buffalo with multiple resources about adapting play for children with disabilities

Simplified Technology

www.lburkhart.com

Information about AT from hands on information to web and vendor resources

Tots ‘n Tech Program

<http://tnt.asu.edu/>

Program out of Arizona State University and Thomas Jefferson University with multiple resources on AT in early intervention

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

Assistive Technology Partners

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303-315-1280 Main 303-837-8964 TTY 800-255-3477

www.assistivetechologypartners.org