

What is Assistive Technology?

The federal definition is "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."

[20 U.S.C. Chapter 33, Section 1401 (25)]

Simply put, assistive technology can be anything that helps a person with a disability do a task.

What can AT help with?

- Speech and Communication
- Daily Living
- Learning, Cognition, Development
- Environmental Adaptations
- Computers and Technology
- Recreation, Sports, and Leisure
- Vehicle Modification and Transportation
- Vision and Hearing
- Mobility, Seating, Positioning

Assistive Technology Examples

No Technology

- Pencil Grip
- Weighted Pencils
- Magnifiers
- Post-It-Notes
- Tactile Letters
- Magnifying bars
- Colored Overlays
- Weighted Writing Utensils
- Earplugs
- Modified Eating Utensils
- Adaptive Seating - cushions, wedges, standing desks, weighted blankets, braces
- Braille
- Large-Print Screens/Text

Low Technology

- Talking Caluclator
- Electronic Organizers
- Buzzers/Lights
- Electronic Organizers
- Automated Pill Dispenser
- Digital Calendar/Clock
- Noise Cancelling Headphones
- Mobility Aids
- Visual cues/Alert systems

High Technology

- Text-to-Speech/Speech-to-Text Software
- Touch Screen Devices
- E-Readers

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY APPS

- Evernote
- SoundNote
- ClaroSpeak Plus
- Natural Reader
- OverDrive
- TalkTyper
- Be My Eyes
- SentenceBuilder
- The Sounding Out Machine

- Breathe, Think, Do
- Model Me Going Places
- Positive Penguins
- Air Sketch
- Montessori Numbers
- I'm On It: Focus Timer
- ExerciseBuddy
- Dragon Dictation
- American Wordspeller
- iWriteWords

- The Writing Machine
- iStoryTime
- injini
- Visual Timer
- Choiceworks
- Too Noisy
- Otsimo Special Education
- iMoodJournal
- Busy Shapes
- GoNoodle

ADVOCATE RESPONSES TO SCHOOL OBJECTIONS

Objection	Possible Response	Objection	Possible Response
"We don't want your child to become dependent on a text-reader [or other form of AT]."	"As they don't have the necessary independent reading skills [or other skill addressed by AT] to succeed, how will you ensure that they have access to the curriculum without AT?"	"We will provide some specialized technology but there is no need to write it on the IEP."	"I am pleased to hear AT will be provided. To ensure the rights of all parties are protected, our plan for acquiring and using AT should be written on the IEP."
"We can't afford that technology."	"Cost cannot be a factor in the consideration of AT use."	"We are not sure what types of AT exist/would be best/etc."	"What steps will you take to resolve this and fulfill the IDEA AT consideration mandate?"
"Best practice suggests we begin with no-tech solutions first."	"All possible solutions should be explored as quickly as possible to minimize the impact of persistent failure."	"We have determined that your child will not benefit from AT."	"I would like to review the data and documentation that supports your decision."
"Your child is not the only one that struggles with this problem"	"I can appreciate your concern, but my primary interest is the success of my child. As a result, what are you going to do to ensure that my child is successful?"	"We are not authorized to make a decision about AT."	"I am disappointed to hear that. I guess we will need to adjourn the meeting until an appropriate administrator is here."
"It's not clear that students actually do better with AT"	"I would like to see the data that supports such a conclusion. Typically, we need to review performance data over time, with and without the technology, to come to this conclusion."	"Your child is not the only one that struggles with this problem"	

Additional Resources

- Assistive Technology for Kids
- GPAT
- Georgia Tech Tools for Life
- Quality Indicators for Assistive Technology Services
- Technology to Unlock Potential