

## A PARENT QUICK GUIDE TO

# Assistive Technology

*This page contains a summary of information that parents may use to guide their active and equal participation on their child's team. The content is only a summary and further exploration of listed resources is encouraged.*

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### **ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY (AT)**

*“Assistive technology device” means 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 the functional capabilities of a child with a disability. The term does not include a medical device that is surgically implanted, or the replacement of such device.*

*“Assistive technology service” means any service that directly assists a child with a disability in the selection, acquisition, or use of an assistive technology device.*

### **TERMS TO KNOW**

**ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY DEVICE** - is any item, piece of equipment, or product system used and may range from low tech (e.g., pencil grip / magnifying glass) to high tech (e.g., specialized communication computer).

**ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY SERVICE** - what/who needs to be in place that directly assists in all processes involved in using an AT device.

**ACCESS** - means to have an opportunity to participate in activity with typically developing peers.

### **PARENT PREPARATION**

- Remember, acquiring AT is an ongoing process. Your child's AT needs will change as s/he grows physically, cognitively, and emotionally.
- How much is my child interested in technology?
- What are my child's experiences with technology?
- What are my child's strengths? What is s/he good at doing?
- How will AT decrease my child's struggles and increase my child's skills at school?
- What tasks does my child most struggle with day to day?
- In what academic areas does my child struggle?
- In what settings / situations will my child need AT?
- Where will the AT tool be used (home, school, work, social settings)?
- How portable is it?
- How easy is it to learn about and operate?
- What technical support is available?
- Does it need to work with other technologies?
- How reliable is it? (Ask past and present users how well the product holds up)
- Are there devices for my child to try before purchasing?

## QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER WITH THE TEAM

- Does the child need **assistive technology (AT)**:
  - to meaningfully participate in the general curriculum?
  - to receive a free and appropriate public education (FAPE)?
  - to participate in academic or functional activities?
  - to access print materials?
  - to access auditory information?
  - for written communication and/or computer access?
  - for augmentative/alternative communication (AAC)?
  - to participate in state and local assessments?
  
- Does the child require **AT services** for:
  - evaluation of needs?
  - purchasing, leasing, or providing a piece of assistive technology?
  - selecting, designing, fitting, customizing, or adapting AT devices?
  - coordinating and using other therapies, interventions, or services with AT devices?
  - i.e., who will charge/maintain device and provide updates?
  - training or technical assistance for child, family, professional?

## RESOURCES

**Contact your local school district**

**State Support Team Region 6** \_\_\_\_ **800.686.2945** \_\_\_\_ **[www.sst6.org](http://www.sst6.org)**

**Ohio Department of Education (ODE)** \_\_\_\_\_ **[education.ohio.gov](http://education.ohio.gov)**

**Ohio Center for Autism and Low Incidence (OCALI)** \_\_\_\_\_ **[www.ocali.org](http://www.ocali.org)**

**Family Center on Technology and Disability (FCTD)** \_\_\_\_\_ **[www.fctd.info](http://www.fctd.info)**

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