



## Assistive Technology and Your Child

Kelly Charlebois, ATP, Clinical Manager, TechACCESS of RI

Assistive technology (AT) can help students with many different types of disabilities. The use of technology to support learning differences is effective for many students because it allows them to utilize their learning strengths. AT does not eliminate the need for other types of intervention. Rather, AT works interactively with other strategies to enhance the entire learning process. The outcome of appropriate assistive technology use should be to increase your child's independence and help them achieve academic success.

Consideration of Assistive Technology should be reviewed as part of the IEP process. You do not have to wait for an IEP meeting to address your concerns with the educational team - you can ask for an IEP review at any time. Your district may have someone qualified to perform an assistive technology evaluation. If so, following the evaluation, you should be provided with a report and recommendations to review with your child's IEP team. If you feel you need additional input, you can discuss your options with the Special Education Administrator.

A good Assistive Technology Evaluation should:

1. be completed in the child's natural environment where the technology will be used.
2. gather information from all members of the educational team to insure that the student's needs in all areas are being appropriately identified.
3. identify student's strengths and review successful accommodations and strategies currently being implemented.
4. provide a trial, as appropriate, with specific software/devices (by loan or rental) to determine if they are appropriate within the classroom/school environment. Data should be collected to help determine student performance and identify barriers.
5. provide clear recommendations and include short and long term planning, linking performance to academic goals.
6. provide information for purchasing.
7. be followed by a meeting to review the recommendations and make determinations as to how to implement assistive technology use. The IEP should be modified to include the new accommodations, as well as any training that may be required to help your child become a competent user of the technology. Assistive technology goals should be reviewed annually as part of the IEP process.

TechACCESS of RI  
110 Jefferson Blvd., Suite I, Warwick, RI 02888  
(401) 463-0202 Fax (401) 463-3433  
techaccess@techaccess-ri.org  
www.techaccess-ri.org

