

OVERVIEW OF NEWLY RELEASED GUIDANCE ON ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY (AT)

PRESENTED AT THE AT3 CENTER MEETING OF THE EDUCATION
PEER ACTION LEARNING COHORT

JANUARY 24, 2024

Purposes

- ▶ Increase understanding of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act's (IDEA's) assistive technology (AT) requirements
- ▶ Dispel common misconceptions regarding AT
- ▶ Provide examples of the use of AT devices and services for children with disabilities
- ▶ Highlight the different requirements under Part C and Part B of IDEA

- ▶ 23 pages organized by Myths & Facts related to AT

- ▶ 5 Sections
 - I. Assistive Technology Requirements Under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
 - II. Common Myths and Facts about Assistive Technology Devices and Services
 - III. Common Myths and Facts about Deploying Assistive Technology Devices and Services
 - IV. Assistive Technology Requirements Under Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
 - V. Common Myths and Facts about Assistive Technology Costs and Funding Sources

- ▶ AT Improves Outcomes
- ▶ AT Transforms Learning, Reduces Barriers
- ▶ Misconceptions Lead to Underuse of AT
- ▶ Successful AT Practices Have Strong Infrastructure Supports

Collaboration Is Key

- ▶ Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services/Office of Special Education Programs (ED)
- ▶ Office of Educational Technology (ED)
- ▶ Administration for Community Living (HHS)



Connecting IDEA and AT Act Programs

- ▶ The AT Act supports State efforts to **improve the provision of assistive technology to individuals with disabilities of all ages**, including underrepresented populations, through comprehensive statewide programs
- ▶ IDEA requires consideration of AT for all children with disabilities. Three Myths/Facts reference AT Act Programs administered through the Administration for Community Living (HHS)

[ED AT Guidance:](#)



[AT Act:](#)



- ▶ MYTH: Only staff who specialize in AT can deploy AT devices or provide AT services.
- ▶ FACT: IDEA requires the IEP Team to have representatives of the LEA who are qualified to provide or supervise the provision of specially designed instruction to meet the unique needs of children with disabilities.



- ▶ MYTH: There are no resources available to LEAs who can provide technical assistance on AT devices (e.g., loaning and testing of AT devices).
- ▶ FACT: Every State has a State or Territory AT program that can provide device demonstrations and device loans to LEAs so they may evaluate an AT device's effectiveness prior to purchasing.



- ▶ MYTH: State lead agencies and Early Intervention service providers are not eligible to access technical assistance from State AT programs.
- ▶ FACT: State AT programs serve all individuals of any age, including infants and toddlers, and with any type of disability.



Provide increased understanding of assistive technology devices and services:

- ▶ Demonstrations of AT that help an IEP Team to make an informed decision.
- ▶ Short-Term Loans of AT to assist an IEP Team in decision-making.
- ▶ Alternative Financing Systems to provide and pay for AT through purchase or lease option, or acquisition of or payment for needed AT.
- ▶ Reutilization of lightly used donations of pediatric durable medical equipment (DME) with an appropriate match for childrens' use at home and at school.

- ▶ Information and Assistance to parents, LEAs, and SEAs regarding needed AT
- ▶ Public Awareness events about AT and how to access it for parents, LEAs, and SEAs
- ▶ Technical Assistance for the provision of appropriate AT through educational consultation
- ▶ Training and Education for parents, LEAs, and SEAs to learn more about legal requirements, advocacy and communication efforts

- ▶ Take a minute to make a note to yourself and remote participants can share their thoughts in the chat

- ▶ What are your thoughts about getting started or building upon collaborative efforts between your AT Program and the SEA or Lead Agency in your state?
 - Share an idea
 - Share a wondering
 - Share a goal or hope

- ▶ Requires implementation of best practices
- ▶ Infrastructure supports that builds capacity of IFSP Team/IEP Team (providers/educators)
- ▶ Includes partners in accessibility and assistive technology
- ▶ Makes connections between SEAs/Lead Agencies and State AT programs, and
- ▶ Involves knowledge of State and local funding sources for AT, which includes IDEA funds

- ▶ **Center on Inclusive Technology & Education Systems (CITES)**
Supports local implementation and resources for educators, assistive technology professionals, administrators, and families.
<https://cites.cast.org>
- ▶ The **National Education Technology Plan (NETP)** highlights the digital use, design, and access divides. It includes examples on how to integrate equitable digital practices.
<https://tech.ed.gov/netp/>
- ▶ The **Office of Educational Technology** provides an overview on various funding streams that are available for the use of technology. <https://tech.ed.gov/funding/>



THANK YOU!

