



Assistive Technology & Transition

Presented by:

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Parents Helping Parents & iTECH Services

- Trainings
- Techsplorations
 - T.I.P program (Early Start ages 0-3)
- Consultations
- AAC/Communication expertise
- Information and referral
- Toy-switch surgeon
- Member, AT Network of California

www.php.com (855)727-5775 toll free

Objectives

Participants will:

- Learn about the different systems that cover AT
- Understand the process for obtaining AT through those systems
- Become aware of rights and responsibilities for successful transition
- Learn best practices for coordinating agencies during transition

What is Assistive Technology?

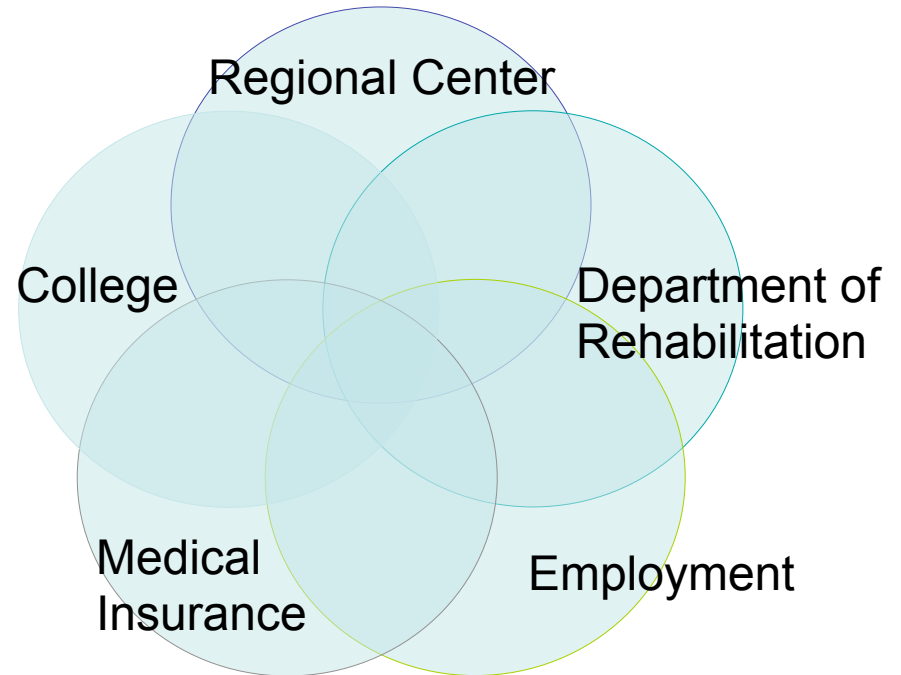
- **Device**: any item, piece of equipment, or product system, whether acquired commercially off the shelf, modified or customized, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of an individual with a disability. The term does not include a medical device that is surgically implanted, or the replacement of that device. *20 U.S.C. § 1401(1).*
- **Service**: any service that directly assists an individual with a disability in the selection, acquisition, or use of an assistive technology device. *20 U.S.C. § 1401(2).*

Examples of Common AT

- Eyeglasses
- Pencil/Pen grips
- Picture representations of objects
- Word Walls
- Alarms on watches/phones
- Magnifying text on computers
- On-Screen keyboards
- Text to Speech software programs

Funding AT after School: Systems to Review

- Regional Centers
- Medical Insurance
- Department of Rehabilitation
- Colleges
- Employment



School Districts



- Quick Review!
 - Education and Services are Goal-Driven
 - Individual Education Plan (IEP) is legal document that has goals and services in it
 - AT a part of the goals and services in an IEP
 - 504 Plan- for students who have a disability but don't qualify for IEP, provides reasonable accommodations, including AT

What happens to AT purchased by the school district?

- Who owns what?
 - If the school purchased it, it is owned by the school, and goes back to the school upon exiting the system
 - In California, schools can sell equipment/materials costing less than \$2,500 to private individuals as long as it is not needed for the educational benefit of other students or is obsolete, with unanimous school board approval. If the cost is more, equipment needs to go to bidding. (Education code 17545, 17546)

Transition Planning in School Districts

- Transition Plan
 - If Student has an IEP, transition services must be included when the student reaches 16, or earlier if deemed necessary by the IEP team
 - Three mandated areas to be addressed:
 - Instruction
 - Community Experiences
 - Employment and other post-school objectives
- AT needs in each area should be considered in Transition Plan

AT and Transition Example

- Joe would like to attend community college, but is concerned that he will not be able to keep up
 - Possible Transition Services:
 - Explore Services available at Disabled Students Program at Community College
 - Assist Joe in learning how to define his learning needs
 - Teach Joe what his rights are for getting his learning needs met
 - Explore AT options to assist Joe in meeting his learning needs at a college level

Agency Coordination

- From School District to...
 - Can invite other agencies to IEP meetings before exiting out (H.S.diploma or age 22) of school district
 - Can enroll in Dep' t of Rehab during last year, but services won' t begin until exited out unless found eligible by DOR counselor for the Transition Partnership Project (TPP)
 - Can invite Regional Center caseworker to participate in IEP
 - Can share appropriate educational records documenting necessary accommodations with college' s Disabled Student Program at which you are enrolled



Employment

Employment

- For a comprehensive overview, go to <http://www.atnet.org/training/archived-trainings.php>

“Your Rights to AT in the Workplace”
Presented Monday June 20, 2011 by
Hillary Sklar



Regional Centers

Regional Centers

- Must be a client of a Regional Center; eligibility based on Developmental Disability
- Funder of last resort-must show other possible funding sources (insurance, Department of Rehab, etc) have been denied
- Must also show that AT is needed to meet an IPP (Individual Program Plan) goal

Regional Center Goals

- Priority:
 - Allows children to live with families
 - Allows adults to live as independently as possible in the community
 - Allow all people with developmental disabilities to positively and meaningfully interact with people without disabilities

Welfare and Institution Code 4648(a)(1)

Regional Centers and AT

- Assist consumers/clients in obtaining services from another agency
- If Regional Center purchases equipment, it is owned by them, but consumer/client has exclusive use of it
 - Move within CA, Regional Centers can allow equipment to move with you
 - Move outside of CA, supposed to turn equipment back into Regional Center
- Note- Day Programs need to provide AT tools for clients to meet Day Program goals

Regional Center Limitations

- Regional Center must notify you in writing if;
 - does not have money to provide equipment listed on an IPP, (runs out of funds)
 - wants to cut back, change or stop a service on the IPP
 - refuses to provide a service you request
- Can appeal- request a Fair Hearing postmarked within 10 days of receipt of written notice-stay is put in place on IPP
- How to appeal – who to contact



Medical Insurances

Medical Insurance

- Includes MediCal, HMOs, MediCare, Private insurances, VA, etc.
- MediCal- financial-need based.
MediCare- age or certain medical disabilities (transplants, etc)
- Other Insurance- through work or parents (up to age 26), or pay privately

Medical Insurance and AT

- Pays for Durable Medical Equipment
 - Includes mobility devices, speech prosthetics (AAC), orthotics, etc
- Private Insurance may not have DME coverage, or pay a percentage for it (generally 80%)
 - If have dual coverage, secondary insurance may pay copay
- MediCal- will need a Treatment Authorization Request (TAR), and only pays for certain items up to a certain cost
 - Power wheelchairs for people who need them in the home only
 - Eyeglasses not covered unless pregnant, under 21, or in a nursing home

Medical Insurance Requirements

- Need a doctor's prescription
- Need to show medical need-if assessment is needed by medical insurance, insurance will pay for it
- May need to go to providers within the insurance network

Medical Insurance Process

- Can be many steps-
 - Example: need a power wheelchair.
 - MD writes prescription for assessment for power wheelchair
 - Prescription goes to insurance DME office, they approve
 - Send approval to provider to do assessment
 - Provider sends findings and recommendations back to DME office
 - DME office reviews (may ask questions for clarification), then sends to MD a request for prescription for specific device
 - MD sends prescription to DME
 - DME processes and sends authorization to provider who then orders it

If DME is denied, each insurance has an appeal process



CA Department of Rehabilitation

My Experiences Getting AT Services from DOR

Jacob Lesner-Buxton

About me

- I am a 28 year old male with CP that affects my speech, vision and hand movement.
- I have my Masters in Social Work and would like a job as a community organizer.
- I love to travel.



Good experience with getting AT from DOR

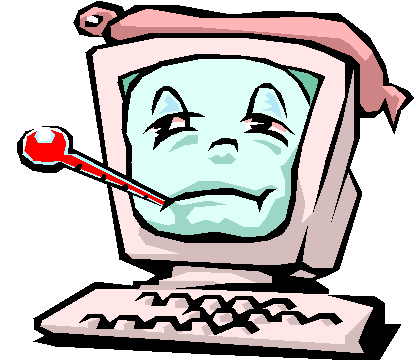
- When I first started college in 2003 a vendor met with me 6 hours and let me try out different hardware and software.
- The vendor delivered my PC to me on time ,showed me how to set it up and was friendly and professional.



700-00030554 [RM] © www.visualphotos.com

Bad experience with DOR and AT

- Before grad school, my PC broke. DOR didn't believe me, so they sent a vendor to verify the damage.
- Instead of explaining to me what new AT was available, the vendor ordered me "standard set up" that DOR buys for many of its clients.
- The computer came about two months after it was promised, in my 3rd week of grad school.



- The person who delivered my PC yelled at me because he couldn't find my apartment. They also didn't speak to me while setting it up.
- I never called DOR again when my computer needed fixing.

Lessons

DOR should:

- Make sure that vendors are on-time and polite when they are dealing with client needs.
- Believe what their clients are telling them.
- Provide clients with ways to learn about their AT needs.

Clients should:

- Be encouraged and have ways to give feedback to AT vendors.
- Advocate to be treated with respect in dealing with DOR.
- Do research on their AT needs.

Questions for Jacob?



Department of Rehabilitation

- **Mission Statement:**
 - The California Department of Rehabilitation works in partnership with consumers and other stakeholders to provide services and advocacy resulting in employment, independent living and equality for individuals with disabilities.
- Upon application, must be found to be severely or significantly disabled (Category 1 or 2) to receive services. If found in Category 3 (disabled) and applied after March 30, 2011- will be found eligible for service, but no services will be administered this fiscal year (

<http://www.dor.ca.gov/public/OOS-Declarations/oos-06-2011.htm>)

DOR and AT

- Assistive Technology can be a part of the Individual Plan for Employment for the consumer
 - Must be related to vocational goals
 - AT is both a device and a service (training on device, obtaining device, assessments, etc)
- AT falls under “rehabilitation technology” which has three categories; Rehabilitation Engineering, Assistive Technology Devices, and Assistive Technology Services.

A Word about Personal Vehicles



- Adapted cars/vans- “We do not have a van program for individuals. All transportation needs are met as part of an overall consumer case plan. Vans are the most expensive transportation option for consumers. If there is another, equally reasonable and less expensive method, such as public transportation or special transit, that is the method we use.”

<http://www.rehab.cahwnet.gov/public/>

[faq.htm#quest16](http://www.rehab.cahwnet.gov/public/faq.htm#quest16)

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DOR and AT FAQs

- Does DOR take back the AT?
 - If Vocational Plan is completed successfully and tools are needed for employment, no. If Client drops from DOR, or does not otherwise successfully complete plan, DOR can reclaim tools.
- Does DOR require that clients have a full AT assessment in order to purchase tools?
 - DOR needs to have documentation that the tools being provided meet clients' needs-does not necessarily have to be a full assessment, especially if client has been using those tools prior to entering DOR system.

DOR Office Policy vs State Mandates

- Each DOR office has separate policies on how to follow state mandates. Policies can be questioned, state mandates can not.
- Client Assistance Programs- Independent Advocates to provide information, advocate, etc if needed with DOR
 - 1-800-952-5544 (Voice)
 - 1-866-712-1085 (TTY)



College

Colleges

- Colleges that receive federal funding are required to provide equal access for all students
 - Most colleges in CA receive federal funding!
- Most colleges have a Disabled Student Services (DSS) program that provides accommodations for qualifying students
 - Smaller private colleges may have the Dean of Student Services coordinate accommodations
- Must self-disclose to DSS

Colleges and AT

- Colleges will provide access to AT needed if it is required for student to receive equal access to the curriculum
 - Will not provide AT needed for Independent Living (ie, mobility tools)

Civil Rights Law: ADA/504

<http://www.ithaca.edu/acssd/docs/IDEAVS504/>

- Documentation required
- Assessment should be no more than 3 years old
- Students compete for admission and must be “otherwise qualified” **without consideration of disability.**
- Students participate in the general curriculum of the college
- Instructors NOT required to alter content or goals of their courses

It's All Up To You, Now:

There are no IEPs and Parents in College!

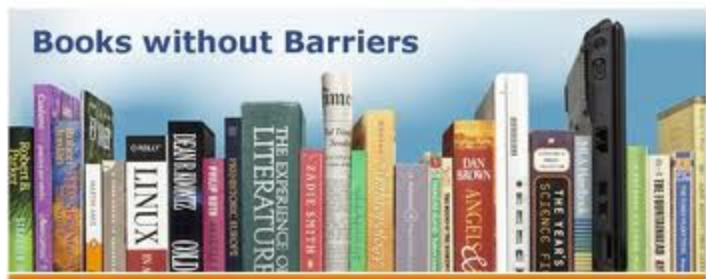
- Must **SELF-DISCLOSE** for services
- Must **TAKE INITIATIVE** for meeting with DSS and instructors (get to know them intimately!)
- Instructors receive only a brief summary of disability in accommodation letter
- Students are graded by same standard as other students, regardless of the means through which they provide their work
- **Assert yourself; create your success!**

Top Two Transition Challenges :

As reported by College Disability Services:

- Unaware of strengths and challenges
- Unprepared to advocate for themselves and navigate the college system

http://accessproject.colostate.edu/sa/modules/sec1/tut_sec1.cfm?display=pg_14



www.bookshare.org

- Materials available on wide range of transition topics:
 - Transition to College
 - Transition to Work
 - Transition to Adult Life
 - Career information
 - Interview, job search and job skills

Self Advocacy in Regional Center and Department of Rehabilitation 🗣️



By Rosalyn M. Johnson

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Biography

- I am 25 years old and have had Cerebral Palsy since birth.
- As a result of my disability I have made use of several social services throughout my life including Special Education, Regional Center and Department of Rehabilitation.
- My extensive experience with these and similar programs have made me a great self advocate.

Educational, Vocational and Independent Living Goals

- Educational-Obtain a Masters Degree in Rehab Counseling
- Vocational-Obtain employment with either the Department of Rehab or another rehabilitation agency
- Independent Living-Obtain an apartment at the appropriate time and live independently with the help of an independent Living Specialist (ILS) once a week.

Setting Goals I WANT to Reach

- Before I go to the meeting(s), I already have a pretty clear picture of the goals I want for the year or other required time. This decreases the likelihood that I will use my support team members as crutches and increases my potential for self advocacy.
- I also have a pretty clear picture of the resources I need so that all I need is authorization

Effective Use of Support Team and Location

- In my meetings it is important for me to do most of the talking, so I consider the type of meeting I am going to as I consider the people I want on my support team.
- I also try to make sure that I have picked a location that I am comfortable with. For example, with Regional Center, my counselor often meets with me at my current school
- Offices can often be intimidating

Assisting in Meeting Goals: Keeping Communication Open

- There are many means I use to keep in contact with both my counselor at DOR and Regional Center including:
 - Email
 - Phone Calls
- The important thing is to keep the lines of communication open. It makes the job of counselors a lot easier, I find.

Assisting In Meeting Goals: Doing Some of the Leg Work

- Part of making sure I get what I need is making sure that the process continues moving forward. Aside from regularly updating my counselors, I am responsible, particularly in DOR, for calculating the cost of my books and supplies each semester as well as remembering to apply for financial aid each year. Also, at the end of the term I am responsible for forwarding my final grades so that my counselor can see that I am making satisfactory effort toward my goal.
- In Regional Center the same thing applies. For example, this year I applied for Section 8 and also made sure that I went to all my medical appointments as well as updated medical information and professionals I am seeing.

Conclusion

- In order to get what I need, I know that persistence is a necessity. I also know that I need to have a relatively good picture of what I want to accomplish, the people I need to rely on to accomplish those goals, and the tools I need.
- When I have all that, giving my counselor a helping hand in moving forward never hurts
- These are the keys to my effective self advocacy in Department of Rehab and Regional Center.

Successful Transition “Musts”

- Self-advocate/self-disclose
- Be proactive
- Know your learning style and understand your disability
- ASK for what you need! Know what accommodations work for you.
- Trial/use the “biggie” technologies *before* college/employment, etc
- Explore technology that capitalizes on your strengths and circumvents your specific challenges.
- Learn both strategies AND applications for the technology

Self-Advocacy Resources

- Yo! Disabled and Proud Resource Section
- <http://yodisabledproud.org/resources>
 - Youth Transition Toolkit
<http://www.tknlyouth.info/>
 - Disability Benefits Information
<http://www.db101.org/>
 - Disability Disclosure
<http://www.ncwd-youth.info/411-on-disability-disclosure>

Resources

- Wisconsin Assistive Technology Initiative
Teacher Resource and Student Resource
Transition Portfolios:
 - <http://www.wati.org/?pageLoad=content/supports/free/index.php>
- Transition Planning Workbook for Families and Students with Disabilities (not AT specific-but AT can fit in any area):
 - http://www-rohan.sdsu.edu/~jrjohnso/SFTEP/module12_4.pdf

- Quality Indicators for Assistive Technology Transition:
 - http://natri.uky.edu/assoc_projects/qiat/documents/6%20QIAT%20QIs%20Transition.pdf
- Family Information Guide to Assistive Technology and Transition Planning:
 - <http://www.aed.org/Publications/upload/FCTD-AT-Transition-Guide.pdf>
- “Accessing Assistive Technology” by Disability Rights California www.disabilityrightsca.org
- Wrightslaw “Transition Legal Requirements”
<http://www.wrightslaw.com/info/trans.legal.bateman.htm#developing>

- www.idonline.org
Transition and Self-Advocacy; Self-Advocacy and College Students
- www.accessproject.colostate.edu
Student Self-Advocacy: Handbook for Students with Disabilities

A Sampling of Books

- Preparing Students with Disabilities for College Success: A Practical Guide for Transition Stan Shaw, Joseph Madaus, Lyman Dukes
- The College Guide for Students with Disabilities Elinor Gollay, Alwina Bennett
- College Success for Students with Learning Disabilities: Strategies and Tips to Make the Most of Your College Experience Cynthia Simpson, Vicky Spencer
- Self Advocacy Skills for Students with Learning Disabilities: Making it Happen in College and Beyond Henry B Reiff
- Learning Outside The Lines: Jonathan Mooney, David Cole