



TECH FOR TYKES

A Center for Inclusive Design and Engineering (CIDE)
Early Childhood Program



Early Consideration of AT

Did you know?

AT devices can promote a child's ability to move, communicate, and interact while participating in everyday activities and routines and may also help families support their children's learning and development? (Campbell. 2006)

Assistive technology is one of the 15 allowable early intervention services identified in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act? (IDEA)

Assistive technology is underutilized in early intervention?

- Providers often lack understanding and awareness of AT devices and services.
- The national average of documentation of AT on the IFSP is around 4 percent.
(Wilcox, Dugan, Campbell and Guimond. 2006)

Early consideration of AT is essential for the well-being of young children with disabilities! There is no time to wait!



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An ideal time to consider AT for young children entering the early intervention system is during the family assessment. Even though a family may not be familiar with AT services or devices, AT can be considered during this phase of IFSP development. While identifying which routines may be challenging for the child, the interviewer can explore if the family feels that support is needed in these areas. Then, they can discuss potential devices or adaptations which may help the routine be less of a challenge. If the interviewer is not aware of, or comfortable discussing these options, they can ask a provider to follow up or make a referral to an [AT Consultant](#). But at least the door is opened to the possibility of AT!



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Is more support needed during bath time? Does mom or dad feel like they don't have enough hands? Consider a bath chair, communication symbols, suction cup soap dispenser, non-slip mat, or laundry basket as a support.

Are feeding utensils too hard to hold on to during mealtimes to promote self-feeding? Consider adapted utensils, bowls with suction cups or adapted seating.





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Is the shopping cart too hard to sit in safely? Consider a triwall or fabric insert or pool noodles.

These are just a few examples of routines that lend themselves to simple solutions with AT. The objective of exploring this through the family assessment is not to identify solutions, but the NEED for solutions. The rest is up to the providers on the IFSP team or an AT consultant. The earlier the better!

You can visit the [Tech for Tykes](#) website Tips and Tricks section for more ideas!

For more help or information contact us at:

Center for Inclusive Design and Engineering, University of [Colorado Denver, 1224 5th St., Denver, CO 80204](#)

303-315-1280, FAX – 303-837-1208

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