



# ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY & EMPLOYMENT

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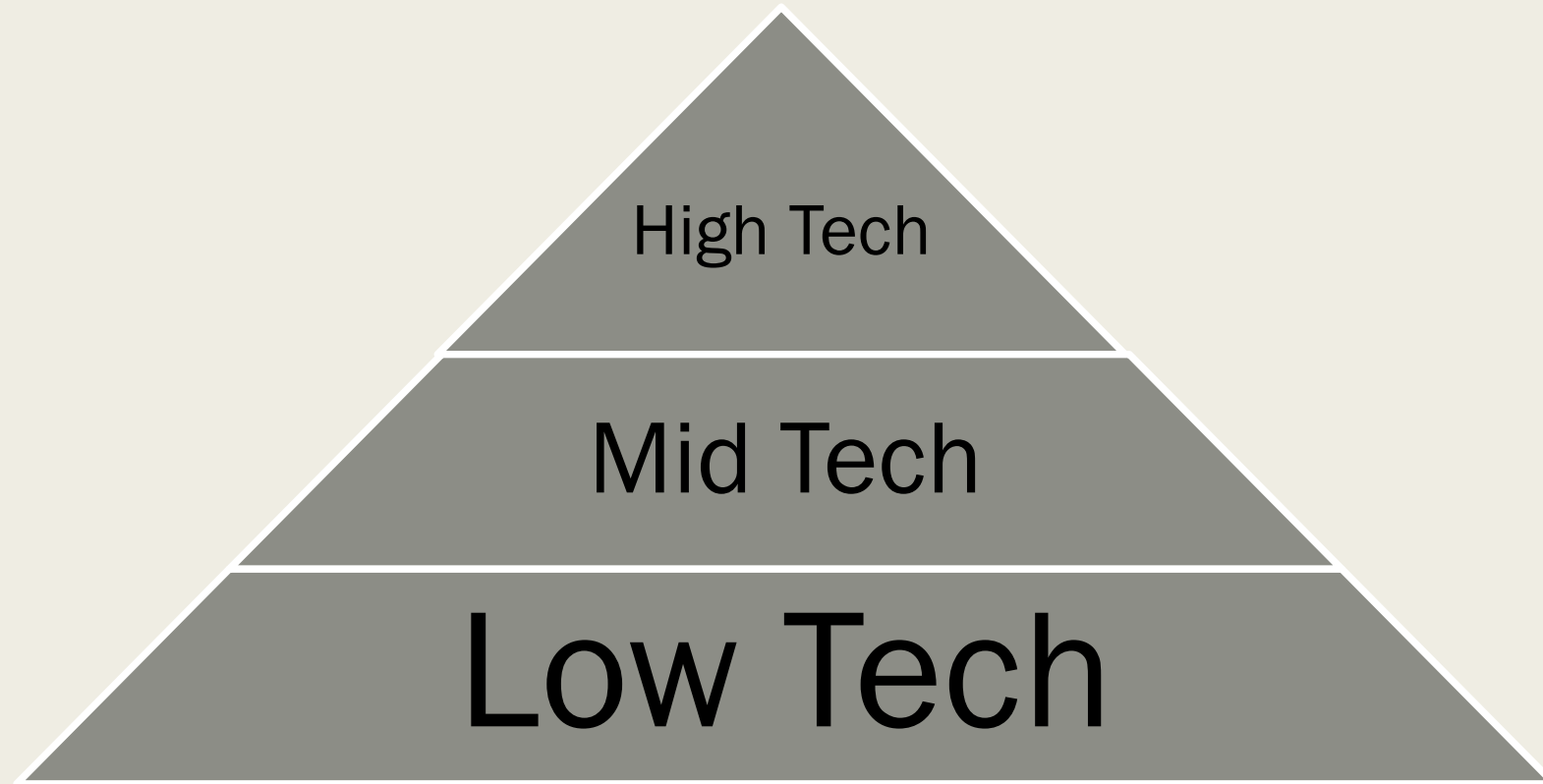
# Objectives

- Define Assistive Technology (AT)
- Range of AT Products
- Obtaining AT
- Highlight some tech users
- Resources
- DDA's AT Services

# What is AT?

- “In general.—The term ‘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 functional capabilities of a person with a disability.”

# Range of Assistive Technology Products



# Range of Assistive Technology Products



## Examples of Low Tech

Post-it notes

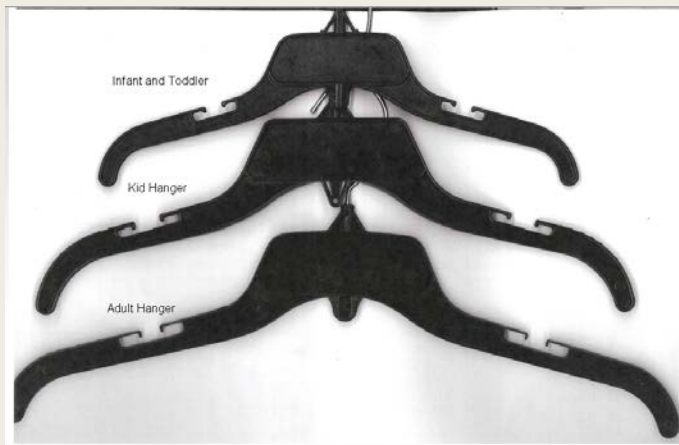
Pencil Grips

Visual Schedules

Picture Boards

Cheat Sheets

Checklist



# Range of Assistive Technology Products

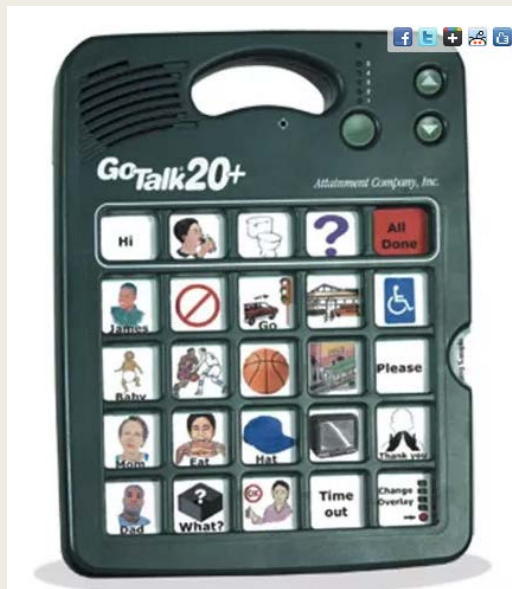


Examples of Mid Tech  
Voice Amplifiers



Communication Devices

Timers



Alternate mouse or keyboard

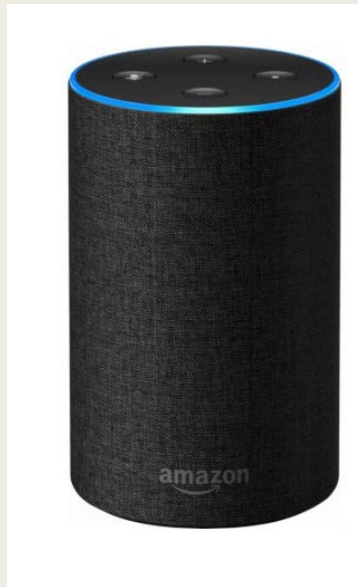
Assistive listening devices



# Range of Assistive Technology Products



Examples of High Tech  
Computer  
Tablet



Voice recognition  
Magnification software  
Screen readers  
Communication devices

Eye gaze  
Head Tracking



# Where do you begin?

- Is there something you want help to do?
- Is there an area of your life you would like to gain more independence?
- Is there something that could help you achieve a goal?



# Obtaining Assistive Technology (AT)

- Consider technology as a support tool.
- Think of all the things we do with our cell phone.
- Lost device = lost ability

“For most of us, technology makes things easier. For a person with a disability, it makes things possible.”

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Judy Heumann, American Disability Rights Activist and Former Assistant Secretary, U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs

# Obtaining Assistive Technology (AT)

## Identify opportunities for independence

[The Arc Baltimore's AT Guide For Teams](#)



#	What do you want AT to help with?	Description/examples...
1	Phone	An adapted telephone is needed because I cannot use a standard phone (ex. need someone to dial for me, cannot hear the person on the other end)
2	Work	AT is needed to achieve an employment-related goal (ex. remembering steps in a job, staying on schedule, using the computer for work)
3	Communication	AT is needed for communication (ex. I use only nonverbal communication or I am difficult to understand if you don't know me very well)
4	Medication Independence	AT is needed for medication independence (ex. staff reminders to take meds, difficulty opening a pill strip)
5	Activities of Daily Living, Environmental Control, Computer Access, Memory/Cognition, or Home Safety	AT is needed for tasks of daily living (ex. eating), computer access, memory/cognition (ex. need reminders, visual/audio schedules, task cueing apps), hearing (assistive listening devices), vision (talking watches), home safety (bed shaking smoke detectors, stove shut-offs)
6	Reading	Difficulty reading due to disability (ex. could benefit from large print, books on tape, braille)
7	Not sure	General AT exploration, not sure if AT is needed

# Obtaining Assistive Technology (AT)

## *Consider AT*

- When is a good time to consider tech?
  - *Anytime a barrier is identified*
  - *Times of transition*
  - *Change in abilities due to illness or injury*
  - *Aging*
  - *Person Centered Planning*

# Obtaining Assistive Technology (AT)

## *What AT services are you eligible for?*

- Consider what AT services (assessment, training, funding) you may be eligible for based on the area of need and explore these.
- Examples
  - *School*
  - *DORS*
  - *Maryland Relay*
  - *Maryland Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped*
  - *Medical Insurance*
  - *DDA*

# Obtaining Assistive Technology (AT)

## *Choose and Trial AT*

- Assessment
- Start with the person – not the tech!
- Communication should be assessed by SLP
- Trial AT in environment where it will be used with input from team.

*Tip: Include DSPs in the entire process from assessment to implementation – they have great input AND need to buy-in from the beginning or implementation will not be successful.*

# Obtaining Assistive Technology (AT)

## *Implementation*

- Obtaining the device (funding)
- The device will need to be configured for the person
- Training for the person and their team

*Tip: Make training videos so when there are changes in support team these can be a great training tool*

# Obtaining Assistive Technology (AT)

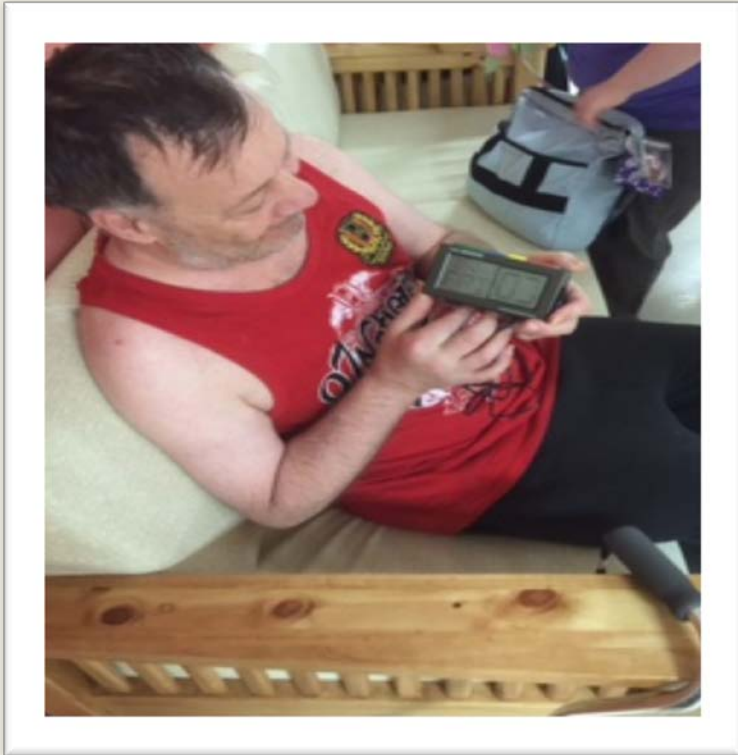
## *Monitor Progress*

- Choose a monitoring measure and mechanism.
  - *Datasheets*
  - *Visits*
  - *PCP Goals*

*Tip: One way to build in monitoring mechanism is to integrate into PCP goals. Is the AT helping the person achieve their goal?*

*Example: I am calling my sister twice a week using my picture phone*

# Meet Don



Don is not always motivated to wake up and shower for the day. With the talking alarm clock, he hears his girlfriend's voice waking him up every morning, reminding him to wake up and shower so he looks his best for his love! The clock also reminds him to take his medications, and complete household chores.





# Meet Leon



Leon uses this little “voice cue” to remind him to bring his lunch to work, an effective and cheaper alternative than increasing his staff hours at home just for this reminder.



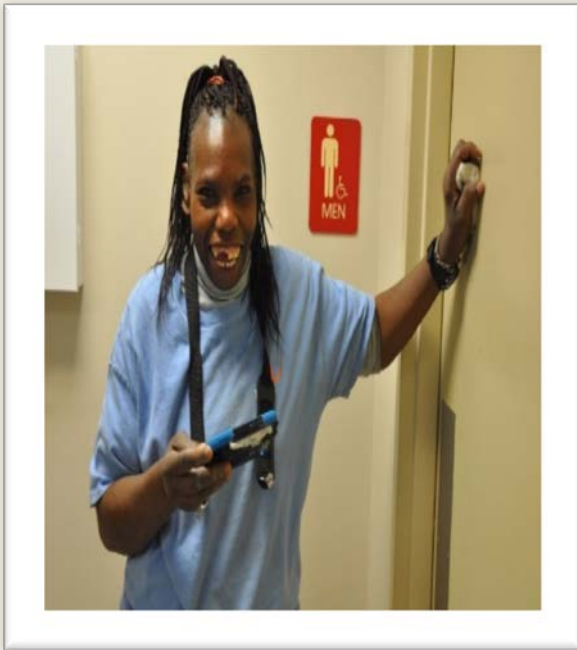
# Meet Cassie



Cassie has a cup stand that she uses to prepare and carry drinks at the hospital.



# Meet Mary Ruth



Mary Ruth is very difficult to understand – but she sure has A LOT to say. Now she has a small wearable NOVA Chat 5 communication device, and she is so happy that she can make people understand her with the push of a button. Here she is announcing herself before going into the men's room to clean it – one of her job duties.



# Meet Leah



Leah's using the Seeing AI App to tell her what denomination her dollar bills are. This is a free app with a great reader!



# Meet Seth



- Talking Bookplayer
- Pot watcher
- Liquid Alert
- Magnifiers
- ZoomText
- Tablet
- Talkback on Android

*“Without this AT I would not be able to be as independent as I am today.”*

[Video Link: AT Tour of Seth's Apartment](#)

# Tech Tools for Employment Seeking

- Video Resumes
- Visual Portfolio
- Slideshow on a tablet

Apps to try: iMovie, Pictello



# Challenges

- Training people who don't have experience with tech to learn new skills- this includes tech users as well as their support network of family and staff.
- Supporting people to utilize assistive technology tools – encourage them to try new things to achieve a better solution.
- Abandonment is a common challenge with AT users. One in three AT devices are abandoned (lost, lack of training, not set up to meet a persons needs)
- Support professionals, care givers and family members must see the value in the tool as well and support usage.

# Resources

- DORS <https://dors.maryland.gov/>
- Maryland Technology Assistance Program  
<http://mdod.maryland.gov/mdtap/Pages/MDTAP-Home.aspx>
- Centers for Independent Living  
<https://aging.maryland.gov/accesspoint/Pages/map-directory.aspx>
- DDA <https://dda.health.maryland.gov>
- The Arc Baltimore AT Guide <https://www.thearcbaltimore.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/2-AT-Guide-For-Teams-Packet.pdf>
- Maryland Relay <https://doit.maryland.gov/mdrelay/Pages/default.aspx>
- Maryland Library for Blind and Physically Handicapped  
<https://www.marylandlibraries.org/Pages/Maryland-Library-for-the-Blind-and-Physically-Handicapped.aspx>
- VLINC <https://www.v-linc.org/>