

Assistive Technology:

A Parent / Guardian's Guide to Success

Video Transcript

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Host: "Hello, and welcome! Today, we're exploring assistive technology—a vital tool in supporting students with disabilities. We'll break down what it is, how it can help your child, and address common questions you might have."

Host: "Assistive technology, or AT, refers to any device, equipment, or system that helps individuals with disabilities perform tasks that might otherwise be difficult or impossible. It ranges from simple tools like pencil grips to complex devices like communication software, all aimed at enhancing a student's functional capabilities as well as accessibility in educational settings."

Host: "Assistive technology aids students by providing alternative ways to access the curriculum and communicate effectively. For example, a student with reading difficulties might use text-to-speech software, while a student with mobility challenges might use specialized keyboards. These tools are customized to overcome specific challenges, thereby fostering independence and success in school as well as making sure students have access to the learning when compared to their peers."

Host: "Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, or IDEA, if assistive technology is specified in your child's Individualized Education Program, or IEP, the school must provide it at no cost to you. The school is responsible for ensuring that your child has access to the necessary tools to support their learning."

Host: "The decision for a student to have assistive technology usually happens at the evaluation results meeting or the Annual IEP Meeting. If you disagree with the school's decision about assistive technology, you have the right to request a meeting to discuss your concerns. Collaboration with the IEP team is crucial. If disputes persist, mediation or due process hearings can be pursued to reach a resolution."

Host: "Schools typically provide training for both students and educators on how to use assistive technology effectively. This can include one-on-one instruction or classroom-based training, ensuring that your child can confidently use the technology to enhance their learning experience."

Host: "In some cases, students are allowed to bring their assistive technology devices home if it is necessary for them to continue their learning and meet their educational goals outside of

school hours. This decision is typically made by the IEP team and is based on whether home use will benefit the student's educational progress. If approved, the school will provide guidelines and support for using the technology at home, ensuring continuity between school and home learning environments. Always check with your child's school for specific policies regarding the use of assistive technology at home."

Host: "As a parent or guardian, your role is to advocate for your child's needs and provide feedback on the effectiveness of the technology used. Collaborate with the school to monitor progress and suggest adjustments if necessary. Your involvement is key to ensuring the best outcomes for your child."

Host: "If you have any questions or uncertainties, don't hesitate to contact your child's IEP team or school administrators. They can provide information and support to help you and your child make the most of assistive technology."

Host: "Assistive technology opens doors to new possibilities for students with disabilities. By staying informed and engaged, you can help your child thrive. Thank you for being an essential part of this journey!"

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