

# TECHNOLOGY SOLUTIONS FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD SYMPOSIUM

## Activity 3 | This is Assistive Technology

### Ponder This:

There are numerous studies that show that AT can have a positive impact in just a short amount of time, yet research and anecdotal data still show the underutilization of technology.

### End Goal

Leverage the ever expanding category of helpful items in the category of assistive technology to help young children with disabilities be included, grow, and learn. We can do this by:

- Increasing and/or expanding our understanding of what assistive technology for children ages birth to 5 looks like.
- Providing leadership at an administrative level about what, when, where, why, and how to document AT in the IFSP and IEP.



## Common Myths About AT

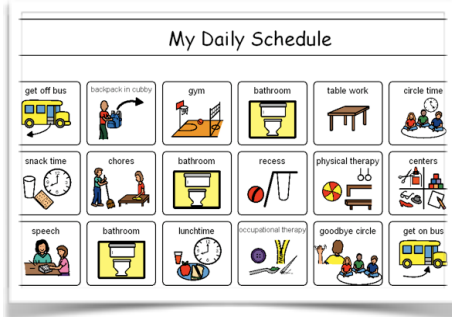
Yes, this is assistive technology. Often under documented in the context of assistive technology visual supports, sensory supports, behavior supports can all fall in the category of assistive technology.

Whether paper systems we print and cut out, written or drawn on a white board, or as an iPad app visual supports are often lifelong tools for many children with disabilities.

On the other end of the technology spectrum we would also consider tablets, computers and robotics to be assistive technology if it helps a child do something they could not do without it.



Center on Technology  
and Disability



## Key Take Aways

- Assistive Technology is represented by a range of items including low, mid, and high tech.
- Visual strategies and sensory supports are assistive technology.
- The answer about whether or not something is assistive technology is "It depends." It depends on if it meets a need and if without it the child is limited in their ability to do something.

## Assistive Technology Resources

Let's Participate Project

[letsparticipate.org](http://letsparticipate.org)

Technology to Improve Kids' Educational Success TIKES

[pacer.org/stc/TIKES](http://pacer.org/stc/TIKES)

Wee AT

[tinyurl.com/DEWeeAT](http://tinyurl.com/DEWeeAT)

Center on Technology and Disability

[ctdinstitute.org](http://ctdinstitute.org)

## Activity: This is Assistive Technology

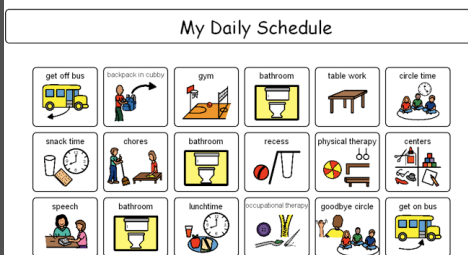
You each have a key chain of items considered assistive technology. Use the pictures and the text behind each picture to engage in a conversation about the current state of assistive technology and what the future promises.

Use the pictures attached to the electronic version of this document to print your own activity and engage your peers in a conversation about what is and is not considered assistive technology.

The possibilities of the future are endless. According to the IDEA the definition of assistive technology indicates that it can be **anything** whether purchased, modified, or made that helps someone do something they otherwise could not do. This makes the definition of assistive technology very broad. The important questions to ask are how does this help a child with a disability and what makes it more than just a nice thing to have?



**This is Assistive Technology**



**Visual Schedule**

**This is Assistive Technology**



**VGo Telepresence Robot**

**This is Assistive Technology**



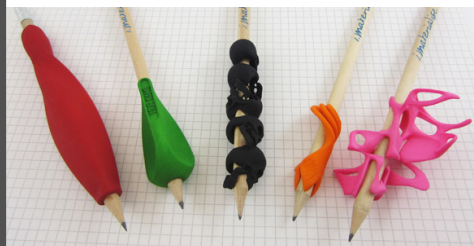
**Laundry Basket Tub**

**This is Assistive Technology**



**Mobile Phones and Tablet Technology**

**This is Assistive Technology**



**3D Printed Pencil Grips**

**This is Assistive Technology**



**Vidget Chairs**

**This is Assistive Technology**



**Snug Vest**

**This is Assistive Technology**



**Alternate Pencil (Keyboard)**

**This is Assistive Technology**



**Fidget - Tangle**

Visual Supports	VGo Telepresence Robots	Laundry Basket Tub
<p>Did you know that visuals tools are one of the most commonly used items of AT in early intervention and early childhood classrooms yet it is frequently not considered AT and not represented in IFSP and IEP documents.</p>	<p>Telepresence robots like the VGo, and the Double and others allow children with health conditions, anxiety, or anything that prevents them from going to school, the opportunity to participant with their peers via the robot. The child controls the movements of the robot which is in the classroom giving them social and learning opportunities.</p>	<p>Common items, like this laundry basket, used creatively can be assistive technology. The definition of AT is <b>anything</b> we can buy, modify or create to help do something we otherwise couldn't do.</p>
Mobile Phones and Tablet Technology	3D Printed Pencil Grips	Vidget Chairs
<p>Concerns about screen time and hesitation about using mobile and tablet technology with young children, often leave this category out of the conversation when it comes to the consideration of AT. There are many accessibility features of devices as well as a plethora of apps that open doors of possibilities for our youngest learners.</p>	<p>The introduction of the 3D printer lets anyone who has an interest in creating AT leverage the power of the 3D printer to become a maker. Many makers develop their ideas for assistive technology and then freely share them on sites such as <a href="http://thingiverse.com">thingiverse.com</a> allowing many more of us to be makers of assistive technology</p>	<p>Anyone working with young children will tell you that they like to move. Assistive technology, like these Vidgets, allow children to move and fidget while at the same time attending and learning. These special chairs come in a variety of sizes and were brought to market with funds raised through crowd funding.</p>
Snug Vest	Alternate Pencil (Keyboard)	Fidget - Tangle
<p>Did you know that sensory and behavior supports are also considered assistive technology? Sensory clothing, such as the Snug Vest, help children learn how to self regulate. The wearer gives themselves the amount of pressure or input they need to help their bodies.</p>	<p>Alternate pencils, such as this Vision Keyboard, gives learners, who are struggling with using traditional paper and pencil, the opportunity to scribble and explore letters and numbers in a way that helps them feel successful. Connected to a computer or tablet the learner can "scribble" in much the same way other learners do with pencil and paper.</p>	<p>Fidgets, like this tangle, help children control their bodies by giving their hands something to do. The tangle and other sensory supports are a common item of assistive technology commonly underrepresented in IFSP and IEP documents.</p>