



ECI understands that families and professionals are increasingly using the internet and technology to access information. Technology is a powerful tool that can help children be more independent, participate in games and other activities with peers, and communicate preferences.

What is Assistive Technology (AT)?

Assistive Technology (AT) allows people with disabilities to perform tasks and participate in everyday activities in different ways. It is any item, piece of equipment, or product system that helps a person do something that his or her age appropriate peers can do without assistance. Examples: A wheelchair used for mobility, a communication device to speak, digitized books or Braille to read, hearing aides to hear, or an oversized switch to activate a toy.

Here are resources that provide tips, tools, demonstrations and valuable information on how assistive technology can be used at home and in the classroom.

SNApps4Kids

SNApps4Kids is a volunteer community of parents, therapists, doctors, and teachers who share information on how they are using the iPad, iPhone, iPod Touch and Android devices with children who have special needs. They have found these mobile devices to provide accessibility for children who may have been previously disengaged from the world because of challenging language, motor, or other developmental delays. Given the rising number of apps on the market and the diverse skills of children with special needs, parents have found each other to be one of the best resources for choosing apps to enhance everyday life for their children. While this group is primarily parent-driven, their efforts are naturally collaborative with the people who help their children develop particular skills — therapists and educators. Visit <http://www.snapps4kids.com/about/> for more information on creative and useful ways to incorporate technology into learning and development.

Center for Early Literacy Learning

The goal of the Center for Early Literacy Learning (CELL) is to promote the adoption and sustained use of evidence-based early literacy learning practices. This site has resources for early childhood intervention practitioners, parents, and other caregivers of children, birth to five years of age, with identified disabilities, developmental delays, and those at risk for poor

Texas Parent to Parent

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outcomes. The CELL is a major initiative of the Center for Evidence-Based Practices at the [Orelena Hawks Puckett Institute](#).

The CELL has published 15 new CELL practice guides with adaptations for infants, toddlers and preschoolers, which show how to adapt early literacy activities so that young children with disabilities can participate. The guides can be used by practitioners or parents, or by parents in collaboration with practitioners. They describe everyday home, community, and childcare learning opportunities that encourage early literacy learning. All are available online at http://www.earlyliteracylearning.org/pg_tier2.php.

Head Start Center for Inclusion

The success of inclusion depends on everyone realizing that it involves more than children "just being there." Inclusion refers to the full and active participation of young children with disabilities in programs with typically developing children. For thirty years, research findings and public policies have promoted preschool inclusion as an important element in producing positive outcomes for young children with disabilities and their families (Guralnick, 2001; Smith & Rapport, 2001; Strain, McGee & Kohler, 2001).

The Head Start Center for Inclusion systematically addresses existing barriers to effective inclusion and increases the competence, confidence and effectiveness of personnel in Head Start programs to include children with disabilities.

In particular, the Head Start Center for Inclusion has a website page designed just for families. It contains a wealth of information on supporting and including children with special needs in the classroom and home. The Head Start Center for Inclusion has key pieces of information to get families started. Please browse this page for all things related to families of children with special needs. Take a look at the other areas of the site for even more information on inclusion. <http://depts.washington.edu/hscenter/families>.

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