

The **Technical Assistance Guide: Assistive Technology for Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities IDEA Part C** is designed to guide parents, families, and service providers in Oklahoma who have or serve infants and toddlers with developmental delays or disabilities. This document provides information and resources related to assistive technology devices and services for children birth to three years of age with disabilities as required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

The document contains information and resources related to all components of the assistive technology service delivery process to include:

IDEA and Assistive Technology

Assistive technology is a critical early intervention service authorized under Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) for children with disabilities birth to three years of age. Oklahoma SoonerStart Early Intervention builds upon and provides supports and resources to assist family members and caregivers to enhance children’s learning and development through everyday learning opportunities.

What are Assistive Technology Devices and Services?

Assistive technology (AT) is technology used by individuals with disabilities in order to perform functions that might otherwise be difficult or impossible. Examples include walkers, positioning supports, switches that activate appliances or toys, and speech-generating devices to name a few.

Categories of Assistive Technology Devices

Assistive technology devices fall into one of the following categories:

- Vision
- Early Reading
- Assistive Listening
- Early Writing
- Self-care
- Early Math
- Positioning
- Computer Access
- Mobility
- Play
- Communication
- Environmental Control



The Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) Team

The IFSP team must include but is not limited to:

- The parents/guardians of the child
- The resource coordinator
- A person or persons having information regarding the eligibility evaluation

Assistive Technology Consideration

All infants or toddlers with disabilities are not required to receive AT devices and services. The need for AT devices and services must be determined on an individual basis by the IFSP team. The IFSP team must consider all services that are necessary for the child to achieve his/her outcomes and to allow participation in daily activities and routines in the natural environment including AT devices and services.

Assistive Technology Consideration Questions

The IFSP team may use the following questions to assist team members in determining if a child needs an AT assessment. Questions may include, but are not limited to the following:

- Is the child able to communicate just like other children without special intervention?
- Is the child able to move around just like other children without special intervention?
- Is the child able to sit, stand, or walk independently according to their age?
- Is the child able to use typical ways to learn from his/her environment and show what he/she knows without special intervention?
- Is the child able to independently eat, dress, bathe, and take care of age-appropriate self-care needs just like other children without special intervention?
- Is the child able to play with others, toys/games, and alone just like other children his/her age without special intervention?

Assistive Technology Assessment

The following are important to note as teams are completing the assessment process:

Unlike other educational assessments, an AT assessment is not completed with the administration of one test during a singular event.

- Assistive technology assessment is ongoing and should be a continual part of the child's plan.
- Assistive technology assessments are conducted within the child's natural environment by providers knowledgeable about AT devices and services.



Assistive Technology Assessment Process

A. Gathering Information about the Child, Environments, Tasks, and Tools

The following are techniques team members may utilize when gathering information:

- Observations
- Interactions
- Interviews
- Record Review

B. Determining Potential AT Devices and/or Strategies and Trialing Device(s)

Based on gathered information, a list of AT tools to be trialed by the child is generated by the team. To prepare for the trial, the IFSP team should:

- Identify who is to coordinate the trial
- Include training
- Identify a start/finish date for the trial
- Identify criteria for determining the success of the trial
- Have a process for collecting and reviewing data

Note: The Oklahoma Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (www.library.state.ok.us) and Oklahoma ABLE Tech (<http://okabletech.okstate.edu>) are great resources for getting devices to trial.

C. Collecting Data and Making a Decision

The IFSP team will need to:

- a. Document AT tried
- b. Include the results of each of the trials with objective criteria

If more than one device meets the same need, the team may need to consider additional questions to select the best device:

- Will a no- or low-tech solution work just as well as a high-tech solution?
- Will the technology work in all necessary settings or environments?
- If it will be moved regularly, how portable is it?
- How easy is it to learn and operate?
- How reliable is it under home or other conditions?
- Does it need to work with other technologies?
- Are there sufficient technical resources available to support the technology?



D. Recommending AT and Documenting in the IFSP

Once the team has collected data on AT device trials, members should be able to make recommendations about specific AT device features, strategies, and/or services that should be included in the IFSP. This is critical as sometimes the IFSP is the only information trail following the child from one place to another.

E. Acquiring AT (Funding)

Providing AT - Depending on the type of AT required, there are many funding sources available to the child including Medicaid, private insurances, and other private sources. When funding is not available, SoonerStart is the payor of last resort and may not unnecessarily delay the provision of AT devices and services due to funding issues if a child requires such services to benefit from the IFSP. To obtain recommended AT devices:

1. Identify source of equipment costs
2. Identify possible funding sources
3. Order equipment
4. Plan for training as needed
5. Set up equipment
6. Establish technical support team

Implementing AT - The following areas should be noted when evaluating how well the AT is being implemented:

- Identify the AT tools or systems that will be used
- Identify specific tasks for which the AT will be used
- Identify where the child will be using the AT
- Verify how the AT correlates to the IFSP
- Identify components of the AT that need to be maintained (charged, cleaned, replaced)
- Ensure all persons working with the child and his/her AT are trained
- Determine who will customize the AT (when necessary)
- Note information about repairs
- Develop a contingency plan for temporary replacements (when necessary)

Note: View the Oklahoma Funding for AT Manual online (<http://okabletech.okstate.edu/Publications>) for public and private sources of funding.



Assistive Technology for Transition

Assistive technology can play an integral role in the early childhood transition process. For a child transitioning into the school system with an IFSP, the team would have previously considered the AT needs of the child as required for him/her to benefit from daily routines in their natural environment and/or to achieve outcomes on the IFSP. At least 90 days before the child turns three, but no sooner than 27 months of age, the team members working with the child and his/her family are required to meet with the local education agency (LEA) to discuss the upcoming transition.

Assistive Technology Resources in Oklahoma

Oklahoma ABLE Tech

Collaborates with the SoonerStart Early Intervention Program to provide assistive technology in the form of assessment kits. The kits are used for device demonstration for infants and toddlers with disabilities and developmental delays to help increase awareness and access to AT that will provide families with tools needed to support their children's development.

Phone: (800) 257-1705 or (405) 744-9748
Web: <http://okabletech.okstate.edu>

AIM Center at OLBPH

Located at the Oklahoma Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, the AIM Center provides AT as it relates to reading books in accessible digital and audio formats.

Phone: (800) 523-0288 or (405) 521-3514
Web: www.library.state.ok.us/aim

Oklahoma State Department of Education

Contracts with Oklahoma ABLE Tech to provide an Assistive Technology and Information Services Program for Oklahoma public schools.

Phone: (405) 522-3248
Web: <http://ok.gov/sde>

Special Education Resolution Center (SERC)

Contracts with the Oklahoma State Department of Education to administer the special education due process hearing system for the State of Oklahoma. SERC provides IEP facilitation, mediation, due process hearings, and stakeholder training.

Phone: (888) 267-0028 or (918) 270-1849
Web: <http://serc.okstate.edu>



Oklahoma State Department of Health

Partners with the Oklahoma State Department of Education to provide SoonerStart Early Intervention services to infants and toddlers with disabilities in Oklahoma.

Phone: (405) 271-5600
Web: <http://ok.gov/health>

Oklahoma State Department of Human Services (OKDHS)

Provides a wide range of assistance programs to help Oklahomans in need including persons with developmental disabilities. OKDHS also handles applications and eligibility for SoonerCare, the state's Medicaid program offering healthcare to families with low income.

Phone: (405) 521-3546
Web: <http://www.okdhs.org>

Oklahoma Health Care Authority

Provides healthcare services for several groups including children and individuals who are blind or who have disabilities. Services include, but are not limited to, the provision of AT as durable medical equipment.

Phone: (405) 522-7300
Web: <http://okhca.org>

