

## Assistive Technology & Section 504

*Susan has a learning disability which affects her writing skills. She uses a computer equipped with software for all writing assignments in school and at home.*

What is assistive technology?

Assistive technology—called AT—is any device or service that helps a person to be more independent at home, at work, at school, or at play.

AT devices include everything from pencil grips to computers and wheelchairs. AT services assist a child with a disability in the selection, acquisition, use and maintenance of an AT device. Services include specialized evaluations and training for students, teachers and parents in the use and maintenance of AT.

How can AT help my child?

AT can help children with disabilities participate more fully in school and preschool by helping them to do academic and other activities more independently, productively and efficiently.

What if my child has a disability but isn't eligible for special education?

Under Section 504, children with disabilities who are not eligible for special

education may still be entitled to AT.

Accommodations, aids and services—including AT—must be provided to allow children equal opportunity to participate in all academic and nonacademic activities.

How do I get AT for my child under Section 504?

If you think your child might qualify for Section 504 services, ask your school to conduct a 504 evaluation. Make sure they evaluate your child's needs for AT devices and services.

The 504 team must also consider any evaluation information you already have. If the 504 team decides AT is required, it must be included in your child's 504 plan.

What if I disagree with the team decision?

If the disagreement cannot be resolved in a cooperative and informal way, you can request mediation or a due process hearing, or you can file a complaint with the Office of Civil Rights.

AT aids  
and services  
give children  
an equal  
chance to  
take part in  
academic  
and  
nonacademic  
activities.



## Vermont Family Network

To order copies of this fact sheet, or to learn more about VFN's materials and services, contact the Vermont Family Network  
600 Blair Park,  
Suite 240,  
Williston, VT 05495  
1-800-800-4005

You can also contact us via e-mail at [info@vtfn.org](mailto:info@vtfn.org). And don't forget to visit our website at [www.vtfn.org](http://www.vtfn.org).

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### Who pays for AT?

If AT is included in your child's 504 plan, it must be provided at no cost to you. Parents are not required to use private or public insurance to pay for AT.

### Can my child take AT devices home?

Generally, yes. If the school paid for the AT device, use at home or in the community must be tied to the education needs of the child, such as completing homework or reinforcing skills. If the AT was paid for by Medicaid or private insurance, then it is your child's property and its use cannot be restricted.

### What happens when my child finishes school?

Your child's need for AT should be discussed as you plan for the transition from school to college, technical school, employment or independent or supported living situations. Your discussion should include identification of other possible funding sources for AT.

If the AT device is needed for employment, it is possible that the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services will purchase the equipment from the school.

### Resources

**Vermont Family Network**  
help for families advocating for AT  
(802) 658-5315 • 1-800-800-4005  
[info@vtfn.org](mailto:info@vtfn.org) • [www.vtfn.org](http://www.vtfn.org)

**Disability Law Project**  
legal support for getting AT  
(800) 747-5022 Burlington/Champlain Valley

(800) 789-4195 Central Vermont  
(800) 789-4195 Rutland Area  
(800) 769-6728 Northeast Kingdom  
(800) 747-7459 Southern Vermont  
All phones ( V/TTY ).

**I-Team, University of Vermont**  
help with AT issues for schools and families  
(802) 656-4031 ( TTY )  
[www.uvm.edu/~uapvt/programs/iteam.html](http://www.uvm.edu/~uapvt/programs/iteam.html)

**Vermont Department of Education**  
help with AT issues for schools and families  
(802) 828-3130 ( V/TTY )  
[www.state.vt.us/educ/](http://www.state.vt.us/educ/)

**Association for Cerebral Palsy**  
help with AT issues for families and students with physical disabilities  
(800) 639-1930 Main office  
(802) 257-2237 Southern Vermont  
(802) 723-6303 Northern Vermont

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### Titles in VFN's Assistive Technology (AT) Series

Facts About AT • AT Evaluations • AT & the IEP • AT & the IFSP • AT & Section 504 • Funding AT • Funding AT Through Medicaid • Funding AT Through Private Insurance