

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Should assistive technology be **CONSIDERED** for all infants and toddlers with disabilities?

Yes, assistive technology (AT) can promote a child's participation in family activities and routines. Professionals should work with the child and his/her family to identify the activities and routines the child does or would like to do. Discuss how the child participates in activities and routines and what families feel children are learning. Often, AT can help children participate more fully in the activity/routine, or the activity itself may provide a context for learning. If an IFSP team considers the need for AT and determines that more information is needed, then an AT Assessment may need to be completed.

Is assistive technology required for all infants and toddlers who have an IFSP?

No, the decision regarding the need for AT must be made on an individual basis by the IFSP team.

Who makes the decision if an infant and toddler needs assistive technology devices or services?

The IFSP team makes the decision based on assessment results. Decision-making is a team process that should reflect multidisciplinary involvement. The IFSP team should include the

parent and persons with experience in providing AT devices/services. The team must include the resource coordinator and other team members as appropriate.

What are critical components of an assistive technology assessment?

An AT assessment should be a systematic process to ensure that decisions regarding the selection of AT devices are based on information regarding the child's abilities, needs, environments, activities, and routines. The AT assessment process includes a team approach, assessment of daily activities and routines, and is ongoing in nature. Although most AT assessments are not standardized, the assessment process should be replicable and use a framework for effective decision-making.

What is the role of parents in the assessment process?

Parents provide information about the child's developmental need, as well as their goals and outcomes. If parents believe their child would benefit from AT they should discuss this with other members of the IFSP team. Parents should request an assessment if they are unsure whether or not their child could benefit from AT, or to determine what type of AT would be most helpful.



What are the timelines for buying and providing assistive technology devices and services?

IDEA regulations do not specify a timeline for the provision of AT; however, if the IFSP determines that AT is necessary to achieve outcomes on the IFSP, then it must be provided in a timely manner. The resource coordinator, with the assistance of the parent and other team members, should identify funding for AT devices. When alternative funding is not available, the SoonerStart Program must provide the device. SoonerStart is the payor of last resort.

Are personal use devices excluded?

No, the IFSP decides on a case-by-case basis what AT a child needs to benefit from the early intervention program. If the device, for example hearing aids, is included in the IFSP, SoonerStart is responsible for the provision of that device or ensuring that it is provided at no cost to the parents with the exception of cochlear implants or other surgically implanted devices.

Who is responsible for buying assistive technology?

The resource coordinator is responsible for coordinating the acquisition and provision of AT devices. Sometimes, parents may choose to buy devices for their child. Funding sources that may be used to provide needed AT devices can be found in the Oklahoma Funding for AT Manual at <http://okabletech.okstate.edu/Publications>.

The manual includes a list of available resources, including but not limited to the following:

- Medicaid SoonerCare
- Medicaid Early, Periodic, Screening, Diagnostic, and Treatment
- Medicaid Tax Equity and Fiscal Responsibility Act (TEFRA)
- Supplemental Security Income-Disabled Children's Program (SSI-DCP)
- Family Support Assistance Program
- Private Insurance
- Financial Loan Programs – Alternative Financing Program
- Oklahoma Durable Medical Equipment Reuse Program (OKDMERP)
- Private/Charitable/Community Resources

Who owns the assistive technology device?

It depends on who purchased the device. If SoonerStart purchases the device, then SoonerStart maintains ownership. If the parent's private insurance purchases the device, then it belongs to the family. If Medicaid purchases the device, the family retains the device until it is no longer needed by the child.



Who is responsible for maintenance and repair of equipment?

SoonerStart is responsible to assist the family in repairing or obtaining a replacement for AT devices used as part of the child's early intervention services. SoonerStart can provide substitute equipment while his or her device is being repaired.

What provisions should be made for transfer of equipment when a child transitions from early intervention services under Part C to public school services under Part B?

The IFSP team should consider transferring equipment between SoonerStart and the child's public school district during transition. Agencies that purchase AT can use Memorandum of Understanding or Interagency Agreements to transfer equipment between agencies. Refer to Appendix C, Assistive Technology Devices Purchases/Sales Agreement Form and Sample Depreciation Spreadsheets.

What should happen when an assistive technology device is no longer effective for a child?

First, the IFSP team should conduct an AT assessment to determine why the device is no longer meeting the child's needs and also to determine if the child still requires AT to meet their needs. If the AT device is no longer

appropriate for a child, the IFSP team needs to show that the child no longer needs AT to achieve outcomes or to determine if another device will meet the child's needs. If SoonerStart purchased the AT, then the Early Intervention program can then use the old device for another child or for a centralized loan program. If the parent or an insurance company purchased the AT that is no longer needed, the family may wish to place the item(s) on the Oklahoma Equipment Exchange (<http://oec.okstate.edu>) or donate the item(s) to the Oklahoma Durable Medical Equipment Reuse Program (http://okabletech.okstate.edu/DME_Reuse).

What can parents do if their child is denied assistive technology by the IFSP team?

Assistive technology devices and services are included as one of the early intervention services available to infants and toddlers with disabilities under Part C, and are subject to the procedural safeguards required by the IDEA, including the right to request a due process hearing. As specified in the Policies and Procedures for Special Education in Oklahoma, parents or guardians may request mediation or a hearing to challenge whether the early intervention program is designed to meet the needs of their child. Parents and SoonerStart providers can contact the Special Education Resolution Center. See AT Resources in Oklahoma for contact information.

