



DIRECTIONS

Technology in Special Education

Vol. 4, No 3

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Toys & Kids with Special Needs

It's that time of year. Parents start to roam through their kid's rooms to see what kind of toys or games to buy for the upcoming holiday season. For some of us, the job is a bit different, since our kids may not be able to (or inclined to) play with many of the toys that are sitting on the shelves in the toy department! We have to try to find the right toy to meet the challenges and interests of our particular child! That bright shiny new tractor may look great! But it may end up sitting on the shelf at home until you offer it up to the next garage sale, or donate it to some tyke who'll give it a run for its money! If the really cool puzzle turns out to be a bit too difficult.... it too moves onto wait in the gloomy garage.

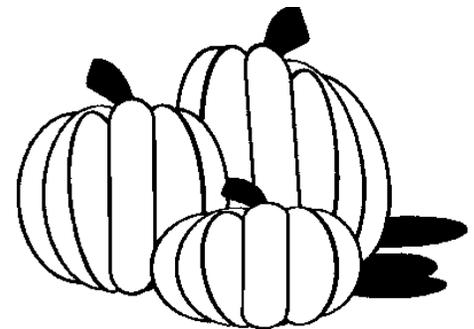
Toys play an important role in the development of your child. They help to develop early learning and creativity skills that are built upon when developing self-esteem and life skills. And, since children develop in different areas at various rates, we need to try to match skill levels with the play benefits from a specific toy or game in order to try to reach the 'whole child'. Ten years ago, it was difficult to find toys for a child with a disability. Today, things are easier.

There are many ways to help to ensure that your youngster with special needs plays or interacts with the toys and games that you buy. Some of these require a little bit of ingenuity, some a little bit of searching, some a little bit of money, and some a combination of all three! Let's take a look at what's available.

Let Your Fingers Do the Walking....

Catalog shopping is probably the easiest way to find special toys or devices that can be used to modify or adapt one that you already have. Larger toy companies like *Toys R Us* and *Discovery Toys* have super color catalogs with symbols next to each toy identifying its primary developmental benefits. The level of your child's thinking & learning skills, social & emotional skills, language, auditory and visual skills, should all be considered when choosing a toy. Product descriptions let you know what play benefits this toy provides, and you match these to your child's individual needs.

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Toys for Special Children

Anyone familiar with early childhood development knows that without stimulation children will not grow and learn as they should. Lack of sensory stimulation at the critical early years can lead to permanent developmental disabilities. In "normal" children, toys provide much of this stimulation, but with their cranks, levers, tiny buttons, and toggle switches, they are virtually impossible for children with disabilities to operate. Unfortunately, 250,000 children are born every year with disabilities and handicaps which prevent them from playing with off-the-shelf toys. Enter "Toys for Special Children"; a company of dedicated men and women who care enough to enrich the lives of those who are less fortunate.

Such are the people of Toys for Special Children. They have sought to create a new world of play for the handicapped through the development of specially adapted toys, capability switches activity centers, augmentative communication aids, and countless other special devices for the handicapped.

The company, founded and run by Dr. Steven Kanor, is currently creating and producing devices to assist the handicapped. Dr. Kanor, a biomedical engineer, designs controls which address the handicapped person's most consistent and reliable body movement. They are extremely sensitive and respond to the slightest pressure, sound, puff or existing controllable body movement. For many individuals, this is their first opportunity to control their environment.

Dr. Kanor's approach has been to modify necessary controls, featuring large, plate switches and joysticks that can be operated by a touch or light bump. Original toys feature puzzles where the correct placement of the

pieces activates a music box. Lights flash, buzzers and bells sound, music boxes, radios and TVs play-all with bead or sip and puff controls-giving a child a needed reward for his efforts. For children with visual impairments, small enclosed fans deliver a blast of air - for those with hearing impairments, a plate vibrates.

Continuous inability to engage in physical activity and gain mastery over their environment may cause a child with severe physical limitations, yet normal intellect to loose motivation and become passive. Growth in these areas may be limited when a child cannot be an active participant in play. Without the experience of hands-on exploration of the world around a child, the chances of becoming a fully productive adult are lessened.

Unique utilization of modem technology has not only resulted in development of adaptations for existing toys, but in innovative devices that enable the physically handicapped to communicate, work at a job, control wheelchairs, access and control their living environment, and use computers!

The goal at Toys for Special Children is to provide customers with durable, innovative products at reasonable costs. Products from Toys for Special children are currently being used all over the world by the physically handicapped, and the hospitals, schools, and clinics that serve them. The staff of Toys for Special Children will continue in their endeavors to bring joy into the lives of children and adolescents who just want to play.

You can contact Toys for Special Children at 385 Warburton Avenue, Hastings-on-Hudson, NY 10706. Phone: 914-478-0960 Fax: 914-478-7030. §

DIRECTIONS

Technology in Special Education

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Surfing the Web

Source: *CEC Today Vol, 4 No 2*

Are you brand new to the World Wide Web? If you can access a computer that is hooked up to the Internet, follow the steps below and you will be surfing in no time!

1. Ask someone which "browser" the computer has. The browser" is the type of software the computer uses to access the WWW. The most common browsers are Netscape Navigator, Microsoft Internet Explorer and AOL (America Online). Accessing the WWW through AOL is a little different, so you will need to have someone who knows how to use AOL to help you start.

2. Using the computer mouse, point to the name of the browser on the computer screen with the little picture

attached (known as "icons"). The browser will start up, and you will see a Web page.

3. The Web page that is now in the window is the browser's "home page." Notice that toward the top of the screen there is a button called Home." Every time you point and click on that button, you will return to the page that is now displayed. You can go anywhere on the WWW using the buttons you now see on the browser.

4. In both Netscape and Internet Explorer (IE), you will see a bar near the top of the window where a "Web address" is shown. A Web address looks something like this: <http://www.cec.sped.org> (CEC's Web address). To go to a different Web

page, double-click on this box. When the address is highlighted, 8. You can also move to different pages using the "Forward" button at the top of the browser. This will take you forward to the page you were just viewing.

9. It is very important for Web surfers to be able to return to their favorite Web sites without having to remember all of those crazy Web addresses. Browsers make this easy to do. When you are viewing a page that you may wish to return to in the future, do the following:

Find the word "Bookmarks" or "Favorites" at the top of the screen and click on it, keep pressing on the mouse button, and pull the mouse

Please see SURFING on page 10

ATFSCP Notes

The Assistive Technology Funding and Systems Change Project

http://www.ucpa.org/html/innovative/atfsc_index.html

Part C: INFANTS AND TODDLERS WITH DISABILITIES ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY POLICY

Findings and Policy

The Congress finds that there is an urgent and substantial need (1) to enhance the development of infants and toddlers with disabilities and to minimize their potential for developmental delay, (2) to reduce the educational costs to our society, including our Nation's schools, by minimizing the need for special education and related services after infants and toddlers with disabilities reach school age, (3) to minimize the likelihood of institutionalization of individuals with disabilities and maximize the potential for their independent living in society, (4) to enhance the capacity of families to meet the special needs of their infants and toddlers with disabilities, and (5) to enhance the capacity of State and local agencies and service providers to identify, evaluate, and meet the needs of historically under represented populations, particularly minority, low-income, inner city, and rural populations.

History

When Congress enacted Part H of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) in 1988 (now Part C), these findings reflected Congress' recognition of the benefits of providing early intervention services to very young children throughout the nation, and established this recognition as public policy. Many infants and toddlers who previously would have gone unserved

are now receiving services because of the passage of Part C. However, few states have addressed the provision of assistive technology devices and services to infants and toddlers as part of their early intervention services, although in many instances, technology is a necessary component of a meaningful and appropriate early intervention plan.

To begin to address this situation, the Assistive Technology Funding and Systems Change Project (ATFSCP) established a Policy Group on Part C Services. The group was comprised of parents of children with disabilities, persons with disabilities, representatives of the Protection and Advocacy system, state Tech Act agencies, and NEC-TAS, a national project that provides technical assistance to state Part C programs. ATFSCP staff provided support to the group, which met several times by teleconference to determine the criteria that should be considered the "critical elements" of any policy statements regarding assistive technology and Part C services. This paper identifies those "critical elements" as well as general considerations to guide the development of policy at the state and federal levels.

This paper is meant to give guidance to parents and professionals in their advocacy to ensure the fulfillment of the public policy goals of Part C and to improve access to technology by infants and toddlers. The paper can

also serve as the basis for the development of a similar set of criteria to address the issue of technology access by school-aged children.

General Considerations

Definitions

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the Technology Related Assistance for Individuals with Disabilities Act of 1988, as amended (Tech Act) define assistive technology devices and services as follows:

The term 'assistive technology device' means any item, piece of equipment, or product system, whether acquired commercially off the shelf, modified, or customized, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities. 20 U.S.C. 1401(25).

The term 'assistive technology service' means any service that directly assists an individual with a disability in the selection, acquisition, or use of an assistive technology device. Such term includes:

(A) the evaluation of the needs of an individual with a disability, including a functional evaluation of the individual in the individual's customary environment;

(B) purchasing, leasing, or otherwise providing for the acquisition of assistive technology devices by individuals with disabilities;

(C) selecting, designing, fitting, customizing, adapting, applying, maintaining, repairing, or replacing of assistive technology devices;

(D) coordinating and using other therapies, interventions, or services with assistive technology devices, such as those associated with existing education and rehabilitation plans and programs;

(E) training or technical assistance for an individual with disabilities, or, where appropriate, the family of an individual with disabilities; and

(F) training or technical assistance for professionals (including individuals providing education and rehabilitation services), employers, or other individuals who provide services to, employ, or are otherwise substantially involved in the major life functions of individuals with disabilities. 20 U.S.C. 1401(26).

Recommendation

The ATFSCP policy group recommends that states should develop policies regarding assistive technology devices and services for infants and toddlers.

A policy statement related to assistive technology should describe each area of the definitions listed above. Consideration should be given to listing types of devices, ranging from low to high tech, that are useful in addressing particular categories of disability or delay, such as physical disability or motor development delay,

communication, fine motor, etc. If lists are used, the policy must very clearly state that such lists are meant to serve as guidance and that they are not all-inclusive. In fact, the rapidity of technological advancement will inevitably result in the development of new devices that are not included on a list created at any given point in time.

At the outset, it is important to note that lack of identification of infants and toddlers with disabilities remains a major obstacle to the fulfillment of the Part C goals. Any policies addressing Part C services must focus on the need for effective outreach to families of infants and toddlers and to the professionals who serve those families, such as obstetricians, pediatricians, and nurses. States and localities should examine their Child Find policies and revise them as necessary to reach more eligible families. Assistive technology devices and services should be included in any discussion of early intervention services available to infants and toddlers.

Critical Element #1

An Assessment of the Assistive Technology Needs of the Child, Including an Evaluation of the Functioning of the Child in His or Her Natural Setting

Do state policies regarding evaluation include provisions regarding assistive technology?

If state regulations or policies do not include assistive technology as an area to be assessed if appropriate, then these regulations or policies should be revised to mention assistive technology specifically.

What developmental areas should be assessed?

All suspected areas of delay should be assessed. An assistive technology assessment or evaluation should address possible technology devices and services that are appropriate for each area of delay. The assistive technology evaluation should also address the impact of a particular device on other aspects of the child's life. For instance, if the child needs a communication device, the assessment should also address positioning, access to the device, and mobility.

When can evaluation of assistive technology needs be requested?

An assistive technology assessment can be requested at any time, but should routinely be requested when the child is first assessed for eligibility for Part C services if there is reason to believe that the child could benefit from the use of assistive technology. States should develop a list of indicators or questions to assist team members in determining if an assistive technology assessment is warranted. Such indicators could include, but not be limited to the following:

Is the child able to play with toys independently?

Is the child able to communicate effectively?

Is the child able to sit independently? Stand independently? Walk independently?

Is the child able to feed himself/herself independently?

If the answer to any of these questions

Please see ATFSCP on page 9

Ask RJ

RJ Cooper & Associates

<<http://www.rjcooper.com>>

Question: I am looking for info on a computer keyboard that would have enlarged keys for a person who sees as if he were looking through a telescope. Is there such a device??

Many thanks in advance, Allan Treadwell

Answer: The simplest solution, if possible, would be to simply adhere large overlays on the current keyboard. Data-Cal Corp. (1-800-453-7937, 602-813-3100) produces the "Large Print KeyTop OVERLAYS" for \$19.95. The printed characters are 5/16" high compared to 3/16" on a regular keyboard.

The alternative, oversize keyboard market has been almost completely captured by IntelliKeys, a great product from IntelliTools (1-800-899-6687, 415-382-5959, www.intellitools.com, info@intellitools.com) costing \$395, compatible with Mac, PC, and Apple II (requires specific cable for each; Apple II requires IIe card also). This device, slightly larger in size than a regular full keyboard, is a membrane keyboard, which means it is flat with touch-sensitive areas, that can be set up in different layouts/overlays. In fact, IntelliTools also produces IntelliKeys Overlay Maker (\$69.95) which gives you the power to completely customize IntelliKeys for a specific person. Since you have a fixed area to work with, 13" wide by 8.5" high, as you set up your 'keys' (or cells) to be larger for the person

with 'telescope' vision, you reduce the number of keys that can fit within that area. So a compromise must be found where you have sufficient keys that can be seen by your friend.

Another membrane keyboard that has been around awhile is the Concept Keyboard, by Hach Associates (1-800-624-7968, www.ComputersForKids.com, hach123@aol.com), costing \$350-\$695, which includes the overlay making software. The device is a little smaller in overall size but offers the same type of customizability as IntelliKeys. A nice feature that Hach promotes is that you can have 2 Concept Keyboards active on the same computer at the same time. One can be programmed for several specific keys for a certain program, while the other can be set up for the other needed keys for the program. Another scenario is for the 2 kids to be able to use their respective Concept Keyboards to communicate with each other within a simple word processor. One thing of note that I'm told by Hach, is that the Concept will only work in DOS, not Windows or Mac.

Don Johnston, Inc. (800-999-4660, www.donjohnston.com, djde@aol.com) produces Discover: Board, with large keys on it, which comes with a bunch of overlays, and also has many specific Easy Overlays set up for popular kids software. Discover: Board also includes software for customizing and printing your own overlays to work with any

software. According to the company, this product is currently available for Mac and they are furiously working on their Windows version and hope to be ready with that in the first quarter of 1998.

DJI also produces Key Largo (\$295), which is a standard membrane keyboard that works with Discover: Ke:nx (\$780). This product works with Mac or Apple II's. The only advantage to this product (at least in the context of the asked question) is that Discover: Ke:nx allows you access to the computer by numerous other methods, like Morse Code, single switch scanning, assisted keyboard, etc., which makes it ideal for multiple users).

Finally, the 'grand-daddy' of oversize keyboards would have to be the TASH King Keyboards (1-800-463-5685, 905-686-4129, tashcan@aol.com). This jumbo keyboard has been around as long as I've been in this field. Along with the old Unicorn Board (which was replaced by IntelliKeys above), it is a larger device than the rest at 21.5" wide by 11" high. The WinKing and MacKing (for Windows and Mac, respectively) has 1.25" circular keys with its own built-in-by-design pseudo-keyguard. The keyboard layout is fixed (QWERTY or Frequency-of-use) and is priced at \$900.

All of the above keyboards have the ability to set parameters such as

Continued on the next page

response rate (how fast the device says "Ah, someone is pressing one of my 'keys'", key repeat rate (how fast, if at all, to repeat held-down keys), and other important settings.

There are several other alternative keyboards, like the Big Keys, by Greystone Digital (800-249-5397, 704-875-3293, www.caro.net/gdi, gdi@caro.net), priced at \$119-\$139, however, they are specifically designed for kids and have limited keys and do not have the ability to be set up in different ways. But their keys are oversized and brightly colored. Some of these kids keyboards may be found in computer stores.

A final option might be to forego the regular keyboard altogether and use something like the BAT Personal Keyboard (Infogrip, 800-397-0921, 805-652-0770, www.infogrip.com/infogrip, infogrip@infogrip.com), which doesn't rely on the user's ability to see the keyboard. It is designed to be used by one handed typists and uses a 'chording' technique. Chording is using combinations of fingers to type different characters. In that manner, once a user memorizes the finger combinations necessary, he/she would not need to see the keys at all. The company contends that the learning curve is not as high as you would think. The BAT is \$199 for Mac or PC.

Then, finally, along the same lines, would be to use braille markers on the current keyboard. DataCal Corp. (1-800-453-7937, 602-813-3100) produces such a set of clear Braille "KeyTop OVERLAYS" for \$19.95. §

WATA AT Info

Washington Assistive Technology Alliance

<<http://www.wata.org>>

The Washington Assistive Technology Alliance (WATA) is a project funded by the National Institute of Disability and Rehabilitation Research and mandated by the Technology Related Assistance for Individuals with Disabilities Act (1994). WATA offices can be found in Olympia, Seattle and Spokane. The following text is taken from their very informative web site.

Definitions and Categories of Assistive Technology

Assistive Technology — technology for more independent, productive and enjoyable living— can be simple or complex. It includes, Velcro, adapted clothing and toys, computers, seating systems powered mobility, augmentative communication devices, special switches, assisted listening devices, visual aids, memory prosthetics, and thousands of other commercially available or adapted items. These technology solutions improve an individual's ability to learn, compete, work and interact with family and friends. People use assistive technology to achieve greater independence and to enhance the quality of their lives. Services, such as evaluations, training, or trial use of new equipment are also examples of assistive technology.

The Impact & Benefit of Assistive Technology

A preliminary study (National

Council on Disability, 1993) surveyed 136 individuals with disabilities to evaluate the costs and benefits associated with the use of different kinds of technology-related assistance. The individuals were from four age groups and the results indicate a significant impact of AT on many aspects of the respondents lives, including: the majority of infants with disabilities benefited by having fewer health problems because of AT; nearly 75% of school age children were able to remain in a regular classroom, and 45 % were able to reduce their use of school-related services; 65% of working-age persons were able to reduce dependence on family members, 58% were able to reduce dependence on paid assistance, and 37% were able to increase earnings. Among elderly persons, 80% were able to reduce dependence on others, half were able to reduce dependency on paid persons, and half were able to avoid entering a nursing home. These results indicate that the issue becomes not how can we afford effective AT, but what costs are involved if it is not provided.

Categories of Assistive Technology

Aids for Daily Living:

Self help aids for use in activities such as eating, bathing, cooking, dressing, toileting, home maintenance, etc.

Augmentative or Alternative Communication (AAC):

Electronic and non-electronic devices

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is “no,” then an assistive technology evaluation should be conducted. An expanded set of indicators should be developed for school-aged children addressing such factors as ability to read and to write effectively, etc.

What happens as a result of the evaluation—are there specific recommendations?

The evaluation should make specific recommendations regarding the technology options that are appropriate to address each area of the child’s delay and meet developmental outcomes for the child. The evaluator should discuss the full range of appropriate options from low to high tech. It is important to recognize, however, that in many instances there may not be a full range of options that are appropriate. The evaluator should be prepared to discuss possible sources for obtaining any recommended devices, including the possibility of an equipment loan to the family.

The recommendations should be attentive to issues of cultural appropriateness. For example, when choosing computer software, the focus should be on devices that will be easily incorporated into the life of the family.

Who receives the reports and suggestions for future evaluations?

The multidisciplinary committee should receive the assistive technology evaluation in the same manner as it receives any other evaluation. Future evaluations should be performed in accordance with the timelines set forth in federal and state regulations governing reevaluation of infants and toddlers, and more often, if warranted.

Where should the evaluation be performed?

If possible, the evaluation should be performed wherever the child is most comfortable—home, daycare, or wherever the child spends his or her day. If specialized equipment cannot feasibly be transported to the child, then the child may need to be evaluated at a particular site. It may be possible to perform part of the evaluation at that site and part where the child usually spends his or her time.

Who should be on the multidisciplinary team?

State and federal law should specify the composition of the multidisciplinary team. When assistive technology is an issue, or a possible issue for a child, the team should include an assistive technology specialist.

What kind of background and expertise is required to qualify as an assistive technology professional?

At present, there are no established parameters defining expertise in assistive technology, and no consistency regarding what constitutes such expertise. However, it seems clear that assistive technology experts need to understand aspects of physical, occupational and speech therapy. They also need to understand computer hardware and software, augmentative communication devices, and other equipment. Additionally, they need expertise in both education and technology can be integrated effectively into a child’s life in order to support the child’s education. Realistically, no

one person can possess the level of expertise necessary to cover all areas of assistive technology. Therefore, it is important that multidisciplinary assistive technology teams be created, or that assistive technology specialists form strong relationships with the child’s other related services providers.

It would be helpful if states were to outline minimum requirements that must be met before a person could be identified as an assistive technology specialist. In some states, there is a master’s degree program in assistive technology. Also, the Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Technology Society of North America (RESNA) has developed a credentialing program. While certification examinations may have limitations, it can be helpful in establishing consistency and defining some parameters of what constitutes expertise in assistive technology. Consideration should be given to establishing early childhood as a sub-area of specialty.

At what point is there enough evaluation?

This question is not limited to assistive technology alone. Clearly, children’s changing needs warrant reevaluation periodically. How often depends on the child’s needs and circumstances. The initial evaluation should be broad enough to assess each area of delay and assistive technology devices and services that can address this delay. When this has occurred, the evaluation can be considered complete.

Next Month: Part C Critical Elements 2 & 3. §

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Specialty Catalogs

A number of smaller companies have specialty catalogs for children who have more severe challenges. These catalogs offer toys that have already been adapted with switches or similar activation devices. These catalogs are the perfect source of toys for kids who are practicing cause and effect skills, or have less developed fine motor skills. The toys in them provide a fun way for kids to build self esteem with an "I DID IT!" attitude!

A Little Glue Here... A Little Glue There...

You can also modify commercially available toys for your child's use and enjoyment. Maybe you could use empty spools of thread as handles on puzzle pieces. When you think about it you realize that we can put training wheels on many different types of toys! Or, maybe you're the creative type. How about a shape sorter made from a coffee can. You can cut only one shape (circle, square, etc.) into multiple lids to make success a sure thing. Increase to two, three, four shapes per lid as your child progresses!

All in all, this holiday season will find many of us hunting for the perfect toy or gift for all of the special people in our lives. Be sure to keep your child's ability level in mind, and look for toys that are fun, interactive, interesting, (to your child), and durable and safe.

I do believe there is just enough time before Christmas to find that perfect toy for the child with special needs in your care! §

Toy Catalogs & Companies

Switch Kids, Inc.
8507 Rupp Farm Drive
West Chester, OH 45069
513-86-5475

Toys R Us Toy Guide
For Differently Abled Kids
461 From Road, 4th Floor
Paramus, NJ 07652

National Lekotek Center
2100 Ridge Ave.
Evanston, IL 60201
708-328-0001

Crestwood Company
6625 N Sidney Place
Milwaukee, WI 53209
414-352-5678

Toys for Special Children
385 Warburton Ave.
Hastings on Hudson, NY 10706
800-832-8697

TFG (USA) LTD
4449 Gibsonia Rd
Gibsonia, PA 15044
412-333-6400

Diskovery Toys
Martinez, CA 94553
800-426-4777

Dragonfly Toy Company
291 Yale Ave
Winnipeg, MB R3M 0L4
204-453-2222

Different Roads to Learning

< <http://www.difflearn.com/> >

Different Roads to Learning is an on-line catalog specializing in learning materials and playthings for children with developmental delays and challenges. Their catalog puts together educational toys and materials that stimulate the skills leading to speech and language for challenged children ages 2 to 10.

Created by the parent of a learning challenged child, they know how difficult it can be to find the appropriate materials and playthings for an exceptional child.

The toys, tools and books in this catalog develop a range of cognitive skills for the wide population of children with challenges and delays.

The products are simple and specific so that there is no distraction, confusion or over-stimulation.

This catalog is focused on the areas of speech and language from a parent's perspective. The toys here stimulate cognitive and fine motor skills needed to encourage capabilities in challenged children.

Success in playing gives our children self-esteem and accomplishment.

Why not take a moment to check out their catalog and see their ideas of products for special children.

Phone: 1-800-853-1057

Fax: 1-800-317-9146

SURFING continued from page 3

toward you until the words “Add Bookmark” or “Add to Favorites” are highlighted. Now release the mouse button. When you click and hold your pointer on “Bookmarks” again, the name of the page will be listed. The browser will keep that name on the list. To return to that page, click and hold your pointer on “Bookmarks” or “Favorites,” and pull the mouse toward you until the name of the Web page you want is highlighted, then release the mouse button. You have now selected that Web page location, and the browser will take you to that Web page.

10. These are the basic ways to begin surfing the Web. Of course, there are other things a browser can do, and there are tons of ways to search for information, but congratulations! You are now surfing the Web!! §

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that provide a means for expressive and receptive communication for persons with limited or no speech.

Computer Access:

Input and output devices (voice, Braille), alternate access aids (headsticks, light pointers), modified or alternate keyboards, switches, special software, etc. that enable persons with disabilities to use a computer. This category includes speech recognition software.

Environmental Control Systems:

Primarily electronic systems that enable someone with limited mobility to control various appliances, electronic aids, security systems, etc. in their room, home

or other surroundings.

Home/Worksite Modifications:

Structural adaptations, fabrications in the home, worksite or other area (ramps, lifts, bathroom changes) that remove or reduce physical barriers for an individual with a disability.

Prosthetics and Orthotics:

Replacement, substitution or augmentation of missing or malfunctioning body parts with artificial limbs or other orthotic aids (splints, braces, etc.). There are also prosthetics to assist with cognitive limitations or deficits, including audio tapes or pagers (that function as prompts or reminders).

Continued on next page

Seating and Positioning:

Accommodations to a wheelchair or other seating system to provide greater body stability, trunk/head support and an upright posture, and reduction of pressure on the skin surface (cushions, contour seats, lumbar).

Service Animals:

The Americans with Disabilities Act defines a service animal as any guide dog (for visually impaired and blind individuals), signal dog (for hearing impaired or Deaf individuals), or other animal individually trained to provide assistance to an individual with a disability. [Information in “()” added.]

Aids for Vision Impaired:

Aids for specific populations including magnifiers, Braille or

speech output devices, large print screens, closed circuit television for magnifying documents, etc.

Aids for Hearing Impaired:

Aids for specific populations including assistive listening devices (infrared, FM loop systems), hearing aids, TTYs, visual and tactile alerting systems, etc.

Wheelchairs/Mobility Aids:

Manual and electric wheelchairs, mobile bases for custom chairs, walkers, three-wheel scooters and other utility vehicles for increasing personal mobility.

Vehicle Modifications:

Adaptive driving aids, hand controls, wheelchair and other lifts, modified vans, or other motor vehicles used for personal transportation. §

Conferences & Events**Date: October 30 - November 2**

The NORD/Exceptional Parent Annual Conference: Forum 97. Arlington, VA.

Contact: 800-999-6673;

<http://www.nord-rdb.com/~orphan> or

<http://www.familyeducation.com>

Date: November 2-4

Pennsylvania Assistive Technology EXPO. Hershey PA. Contact: 717-774-5455; Fax: 717-774-5494

Date: November 9-11

New York State Association for Computers and Technologies in Education: Innovations '97, 32nd Annual Conference. Buffalo, NY.

Contact: 800-479-4830;

nyscate@aol.com

Date: November 12-16

American Academy of Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation (AAPM&R) Assembly. Atlanta, GA
Contact: 312-464-9700

Date: November 20 - 24

ASHA Convention. Boston, MA.

Contact: 301-897-5700

Date: December 10-13

TASH Annual Conference. Boston, MA.

Contact: 410-828-8274; 410-828-1306 (TDD); Fax: 410-828-6706;
dmarsh@tash.org

Date: March 17 -21, 1998

Technology and Persons with Disabilities. California State University, Los Angeles, CA.
Contact: 818-677-2578



**The Ultimate
A Communication Device**



has a short-term speech loss due to illness or surgery could also use it as an aide during their recovery. In either case, this economical and affordable device greatly aids one's communication needs.

Ajax, ON -- New from TASH -- The *Ultimate* communication device. Nothing compares to the superb voice quality of this digitized communication device. It features 4 messages of 4 seconds each, and are accessed directly. The unit is resistant to dropping, mishandling and moisture. It has an on/off switch, and volume control... and batteries are included, as always! The price for the *Ultimate* is \$99.00. Watch for TASH's 8 message version with 32 seconds of unbeatable sound!

five different message capacities. The one, two and four message models come concealed in a colorful nylon zippered hip pack with a waist strap, which maintains the user's privacy. They feature large recessed switchplate(s) on the front for easy access by even the most profoundly handicapped users. The 10 and 16 message models easily attach onto a belt, and have clear plastic buttons on top, which allow the user to insert a small icon to identify the message. To record, simply press the record button and the appropriate message button and speak. In use, messages are activated by pressing one of the message buttons. Phrases may be re-recorded as often as you wish, and are stored permanently, even if the battery is replaced. Phrases are changed only when one re-records over old ones.

*TASH International, Inc.
Unit 1 - 91 Station Street
Ajax, Ontario Canada L1S 3H2
1-800-463-5685
tashcan@aol.com*

*Enabling Devices
Toys for Special Children, Inc.
385 Warburton Avenue
Hastings-on-Hudson, NY 10706
customer_support@enablingdevices.com
http://www.enablingdevices.com*

Winspeak 3

Portland, OR -- Winspeak 3 is a program that allows a person with no speech to communicate using a computer. The program is based on the use of symbols. Winspeak 3 uses both real voices, recorded on the computer, and synthetic speech. Synthetic speech is generated from text, and can be produced by a special speech synthesizer or by a sound card. Winspeak 3 may be driven by a pointing device (mouse, trackball, touchscreen, head pointer, joystick, etc.) or by the keyboard, including special keyboards, or by switches using a wide choice of scanning styles.

Hastings-on-Hudson, NY -- *Hip Talk* was developed and engineered with convenience in mind. This speech output communicator is designed for the active individual who needs to keep their hands free in order to get on with their daily activities. Compact and lightweight, an individual can carry it around all day with no impact on their balance or fatigue.

Hip Talk is ideal for individuals with either limited or short-term communication needs. Someone who uses a more sophisticated system most of the *time*, yet needs *something portable and easy to use when going shopping, running errands, etc.*, would benefit greatly from this device. An individual who

Hip Talk is available in two styles and

*ZYGO Industries, Inc.
P.O. Box 1008
Portland, OR 97207
800-234-6006*

**DREAMMS
FOR KIDS, INC.**
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