# AT / FYI · · · ·©

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West Central—Cindy Ostrander

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# Calendar of Events

## 2015-2016 REGIONAL MEETINGS

Benton-Stearns Ed District Office, Sartell MN                    9:00 A.M. – 11:30 P.M.

**September 15**—Processes in AT:  SETT, Consideration, Assessment
**October 7**—Sample Language for Processes in AT
**November 4**—Components & Issues for Technology:  Writing & Keyboarding
**December 2**— Components & Issues for Technology:  Early Childhood
**January 6**— Components & Issues for Technology:  Reading & Literacy
**February 3**— Components & Issues for Technology:  Math
**March 2**— Components & Issues for Technology:  Transition
**April 6**—Components & Issues for Technology:  App Evaluation Systems
**May 4**— Components & Issues for Technology:  Content Areas

## 33rd ANNUAL CLOSING THE GAP CONFERENCE

Minneapolis MN

Pre-Conference Sessions:  October 12-13, 2015
Conference Sessions:  October 14-16, 2015

## CHARTING THE CS CONFERENCE

Arrowwood, Alexandria, MN

Pre-Conference Sessions:  April 24, 2016
Conference Sessions: 25 & 26, April 2016

# AT Information:  Listservs

## AT Listserv

The AT Listserv is a wonderful resource for educators who work with students who use technology for learning.  Members ask questions, share information, and discuss topics that are relevant to our day-to-day work with students ages birth through 21.

How to Join:  To subscribe, visit https://webmail.mnet.state.mn.us/mailman/listinfo/assistive-tech or send a message with the word "help" in it to the request address, assistive-tech-request@lists.statemn.us for further instructions.

To Post on the Listserv:  Send message to assistive-tech@lists.state.mn.us.  Complete the subject line identifying the topic of your post.  Type your message and send it.  Remember confidentiality when posting!

## QIAT Listserv

The Quality Indicators for Assistive Technology (QIAT—pronounced quiet) listserv is a place to share resources, questions ideas, and problem-solving in an on-going email discussion (there are archives and a website of resources to assist you, too).  To sign up, go to the following website http://qiat.org and follow the links to join the listserv.

# Early Childhood AT

Teams might wonder how assistive technology (AT) fits into the program of an early childhood student.  The team needs to only think about how the child accesses the daily routine to answer that question.  The areas that AT can be used to increase the child's access to the world and learning include:

- Communication
  - Expressive and receptive communication in all settings.
  - Communication with a partner.
  - Facilitation of speech development.
  - Gestures.
  - Eye gaze.
  - Symbol systems.
- Computer access
  - Books, movies, games.
  - Cooperative play.
  - Learning activities.
  - Switch access.
- Daily living tasks
  - Adapted utensils.
  - Adapted equipment.
  - Visual schedules.
- Environmental control
  - Remote controls.
- Language
  - Visual schedules.
  - Communication boards.
  - Speech output devices.
- Learning
  - Voice recognition.
  - Switch access.
  - Apps and software.
  - Keyboard adaptations.
- Literacy
  - Adapted books.
  - Adapted writing tools.
  - Adapted drawing tools.
- Movement and mobility
  - Postural support.
  - Joystick to facilitate independence.
  - Wheelchairs.
- Play
  - Promote active engagement.
  - Allow for participation.
  - Promote enjoyment and experience.
  - Easier methods for turning toys on and off.
  - Access to toys that would otherwise not be within reach.
  - Adapted toys and games.
  - Switch access.
- Positioning
  - Alignment for accessing toys and learning activities.

- o Maintain desired position for seating.
- o Promote swallowing, breathing, etc.
- o Prevent dislocation of hips, scoliosis, etc.
- o Enhance socialization.
- o Promote attention.
- Tablet access
  - o Switch accessible apps.
  - o Keyboards adaptations.
  - o VoiceOver.
  - o Accessibility features.

# Classroom Considerations

Oberstein and Hanser (1995) identified some adaptive responses (and what may be influencing that response) that are necessary to consider when looking at the child in the early childhood classroom with respect to sensorimotor needs and AT.

### Adaptive Response
1. Postural stability in a variety of positions (wheelchair, floor, bed, chair, miscellaneous positioning equipment.
   a. Reflex dominance
   b. Influence of abnormal tone
   c. Head and trunk control
   d. Range of motion
2. Ability to reach, depress and release target or switch.
   a. Strength
   b. Range of motion
   c. Visual tracking
   d. Influence of abnormal tone
   e. Reflex dominance
3. Response time for target or switch activation.
   a. Reflex dominance
   b. Influence of abnormal tone
4. Targeting skills to select a specific target of switch.
   a. Motor planning
   b. Reflex dominance
   c. Influence of abnormal tone
5. Ability to visually locate system components.
   a. Visual tracking
   b. Visual fields
   c. Visual perception
   d. Head control
6. Attention to task.
   a. Auditory processing
   b. Attention span
   c. Sensory defensiveness
7. Ability for sustained device use
   a. Endurance
   b. Postural stability.

# Resources for Early Childhood

**Adapting Toys**
Great ideas from the Let's Play Project for adapting toys and making them accessible for young children with special needs.  Let's Play

**Adaptive Play**
Linda Burkhart's handout on adaptive play assists teams in developing a philosophy for using technology, play and communication in the learning environment.  Burkhart Adaptive Play

**Alliance ACTion Information Sheet from PACER**
This information sheet is entitled *Assistive Technology for Infants, Toddlers, and Young Children with Disabilities* and covers the basic questions that arise when AT becomes a consideration point for a child. Alliance ACTion Information Sheet AT

**Assistive Technology for Infants and Young Children**
A PhD portfolio item that describes the possibilities of AT for young children very well.  AT for Infants and Young Children

**CONNECT Modules**
The CONNECT Modules from the Center to Mobilize Early Childhood Knowledge has a Module (#5) on AT. There are 5 steps in the module for a learning cycle.  A dilemma/scenario is presented, questions are generated, evidence is gathered, a decision is made, and the plan is then evaluated.  Handouts, videos, and discussions are a part of each module.  CONNECT Module

**Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center**
Information on AT (what it is, role of family, etc.), federal laws, definitions, state policies, manuals and universal design are topics for resource areas on this website.  ECTA

**Families Together Inc.**
This information sheet from Families and Advocates Partnership for Education (FAPE) outlines the questions and answers parents generally have when considering AT for their child.  Families Together

**Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute**
This website from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill shares a variety of AT interventions and strategies through a listing of resources.  Some of the links are broken, but try googling the information and you will find it.  Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute

**Loc-Line Switch Mounts**
The directions for making a Loc-Line switch mount.  Loc-Line Switch Mount

**Modify a Battery Operated Toy to Make It Accessible by Switch**
A PrAACtical Thinking monthly strategy.  Videos with directions and demonstration are included.  Modifying Toy for Switch Access

**South Carolina AT Program for Infants and Toddlers**
This information sheet defines what AT is and how it impacts a child's program and life.  South Carolina AT

**Switch Adapting a Toy or Game**
This guide to adapting a toy or game for switch access include directions and videos.  Switch Adapting

## Switch Progression Road Map
This 60 page online book explains the progression from learning to use a simple switch to using multiple switches for different purposes.  Very easy to read and step-by-step.  This is a resource found on the Inclusive Technology website.  Switch Progression Road Map

## Talking Photo Frame Switch
Directions for making a talking photo frame communication device.  Talking Photo Frames

## Tots-n-Tech (TnT)
The mission of this collaboration between Thomas Jefferson University (Philadelphia, PA) and Arizona State University (Tempe, AZ) is to "provide up-to-date information and resources about adaptations, including assistive technology, to use with infants and toddlers" in all settings.  This site has a wealth of information and video/pictorial description.  TnT

## Two Switches to Success
Linda Burkhart's handout aimed at developing skills to move from one to two switches for access.  2 Switches for Success

## Two Switch Step Scanning
Linda Burkhart's Stepping Stones to Switch Access handout for single to two switch scanning.  Stepping Stones

# Apps of the Month

## Bubble Popper+ by MobTouch Inc

Free on iTunes
Requires iOS 7.0 or higher
Updated 2/25/14
iPad, iPhone, iPod

Pop the bubbles in the bubble wrap!  There are now games with the app—pop 400 bubbles first to win!

## Fluidity by nebulus design

Free on iTunes
Requires iOS 4.3 or higher
Updated 12/14/12
iPad, iPhone, iPod

"A beautiful interactive realtime fluid dynamics simulation, control fluid flow and stunning colors at the tips of your fingers."  Touch your fingers to the screen and make a glow.  Drag and draw sparkly colored lines.