Massachusetts’ Assistive Technology Act Program

Presented by:
Catherine Bly, M.Ed, TVI
Katie Krusinski, MS, CCC-SLP
The Commonwealth’s initiative to **Maximizing Assistive Technology in Consumers Hands.**

- Comprised of seven local human service agencies.
The Federal Tech Act established AT Programs in every state to raise awareness of assistive technology and to increase access to AT devices and services for people with disabilities.

The AT Act Program does not ‘purchase’ AT directly, but provides support services to help people get affordable and appropriate equipment.

Public awareness activities, information and referral services, and the coordination between relevant public and private entities are also key elements of the AT Act.
MassMATCH www.massmatch.org

www.getATstuff.org
Buy and sell AT via the internet (like Crag’s List)

AT Financial Loan Program
Via Easter Seals MA & Sovereign Bank

Assistive Technology Regional Center (ATRC)
Easter Seals → Eastern MA (Boston)
UCP → Western MA (Pittsfield)
AT Financial Loan Program

- Operated by Easter Seals
  - Jason Luciano, Program Director
- Provides low interest (4%) cash loans for AT over $500 cumulatively.
- Loans offer repayment lengths based on the expected life of the AT.

- **New** Long–Term Mini-Loan Program
- This program provides low cost (under $500) Assistive Technology, free of charge for MA residents who qualify financially.
ATRC at Easter Seals MA

Assistive Technology at Home, Work and School
www.eastersealsma.org
These programs are FREE to eastern MA residents.

Center is conveniently located at 89 South St., one block from South Station in Boston.

At the center individuals and groups can explore hundreds of devices that can meet a variety of needs.

Call for an appointment or visit during our Open House, on the first Wednesday of each month.
Information and Awareness

- AT Vendor Events
  www.eastersealsma.org
- Public Awareness activities for community centers and schools
- Attendance as a vendor at regional conferences and conventions.
- Host and organize biannual AT Expo.
- Offer informational sessions at local businesses & agencies.
Device Demonstration Program

- Individuals have a Hands on opportunity to...
  - Explore specific types of AT related to their particular needs.
  - Learn more about the pros and cons of similar devices.
  - Make an informed decision about what type of device(s) is best for them
- This is a FREE service

- Satisfaction Surveys are to be completed at the end of demonstrations.
Device Short-Term Loan Program

- Borrow for 2-4 weeks
- Similar to a lending library
- Any resident of MA eligible
- Fill out an easy request form
- No referral necessary
- Pick up and delivery of devices can be arranged
- This is a FREE service
- Satisfaction Survey required upon return.
Loan Process

www.eastersealsma.org

- Simple forms located on-line or available upon pick up
- Liability statement
- No medical or academic records required.
- Demographic information is required.
  - The ATRC is a Federal & State program
  - Easter Seals is a non-profit org. and has tracking requirements
Who do we serve? Updated 10/08

- Individuals or Family: 41%
- School Professional: 33%
- Health/Rehab Professional: 12%
- Technology Professional: 11%
- Other: 3%
What are they borrowing?

- Speech: 12%
- Vision: 30%
- Hearing: 19%
- Computer: 10%
- Daily Living: 6%
- Cognitive: 23%

Updated 10/08
What Technology?
Technology for Learning Disabilities

• Text to speech
• Reading and Writing support tools
• Word prediction
• Organizational software
• Recorders
• PDAs
Speech Recognition

- Dragon Naturally Speaking
- IListen for MAC
- Speak Q & Word Q
Mouse Alternatives

- Head Mouse
- Joystick
- Optical Trackball
- BigTrack Rollerball
- Marble Mouse
- Jouse 2
- Puff switch
- Foot Mouse
Alternative Keyboards

- Ergonomic Keyboards
- Large Print Keyboards
  - IntelliKeys
- Large Key/Small Key
- On-Screen Keyboards
AT for Visual Difficulties

- Magnifiers
- Notetakers
- Scanners
- Telescopes
- CCTVs
- Braille Embossers

- Magnification software
- Screen Reader software
- Audio devices
- Large Print aides
Environmental Control Devices

- Relax II ECU
- Powerlink
- Mini Relax
- Surfboard Remote
- Transmitters and Receivers
Daily Living

- Switches
- Switch Adapted devices & toys
- Kitchen, dressing, and household supports
Communication Aids

- Static Display
- Dynamic Display
- Text to Speech
- Software Programs
Assistive Listening Technology

- Signal Alarm
- Baby Alarms
- Amplified Telephones
- FM Systems
- Special Headphones
- Vibrating watch
- Amplification devices
- Neckloops
New Website is here!
www.massmatch.org

- AT Information for Providers, Consumers, Educators, and Employers!
- AT Regional Center Inventory with pictures and descriptions of all products available for loan. Use a ‘cart’ to check out items, print, and fax the online form!
- Information on providers, services, and resources available around MA!
The Future!

Contact us to...

- Provide information to your business, agency or school.
- Host a Vendor event with us or at your facility!
- Tell us how we can continue to help you gain access to AT devices, information, and services!

Spread the Word about this free access to AT at the ATRC!
Questions about the ATRC?