



AT Consideration Series: Beyond the Checkbox

Technology Everywhere: When Universal Tools Become AT

About OCALI

- Vision – Why We Do What We Do
People with disabilities have the opportunity to live their best lives.
- Mission – What We Do
OCALI inspires change and promotes access to opportunities for people with disabilities.
- Action – How We Do What We Do
OCALI informs public policy and develops and deploys practices grounded in linking research to real life.

About the AT&AEM Center

The AT&AEM Center is a centralized, responsive resource center that empowers individuals with disabilities by providing accessible educational materials, access to assistive technologies and highly specialized technical assistance and professional development support.

<https://ataem.org>

Session Objectives

1. Participants will be able to define Universal Tools and Assistive Technology
2. Participants will be able to describe the decision-making process for when Universal Tools become Assistive Technology
3. Participants will be able to list two resources related to Universal Tools and AT

Definition of Assistive Technology Device

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 the functional capabilities of a child with a disability. The term does not include a medical device that is surgically implanted, or the replacement of that device.



Definition of Assistive Technology Service

Any service that directly assists a child with a disability in the selection, acquisition, or use of an assistive technology device. ([IDEA, 2004](#)); ([OAC, 2014](#)).

Universal Tools

Universal tools range from low-tech to high-tech and are usable by all individuals, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design.

AT Consideration in Special Factors

IDEA requires IEP Teams to “consider whether the child needs assistive technology devices and services.”

[AT Resource Guide](#)

General information on the school district's responsibility to consider the AT needs of all students who are receiving special education services and on the legal implications for districts is provided.

[AT Decision-Making Tool](#)

1. Identify the Task
2. Current Use of AT
3. *Universal Tools*
4. AT Assessment
5. Accessible Educational Materials
6. Additional Areas of Focus

Case Scenario: Connor

Connor, a 13-year-old student can access writing tools and a computer to complete assignments. However, because of severe spelling and grammar errors, most of his production of written work is not equal to the quality expected at his grade-level, despite explicit instruction in these areas. Connor is still expected to spell and use grammar at the level of same-age peers.



Case Scenario Steps for Conner

- Step 1 Identifying the task: Connor has difficulty with spelling and grammar in order to produce written work.
- Step 2 Current use of AT: Conner currently has access to a laptop and text to speech
- Step 3 Universal Tools: Conner uses universal tools but *cannot complete tasks at the same level as his peers, column 3 should be marked* indicating he needs additional support and services which will be discussed more in the next step around AT Assessment