

# What is Assistive Technology?

Assistive Technology (AT) is just that — there to help. For many individuals, it reimagines their daily life in a more inclusive, accessible way. From simple aids to high-tech solutions, these devices empower people with physical or cognitive disabilities, neurodivergent challenges, and other impairments to live more independent, fulfilling lives.



We can tell you all the great things about Assistive Technology, but it's better to see how it really works. For Alexis, AT has helped her become more independent, making it safe for her to have her own apartment and complete tasks on her own.

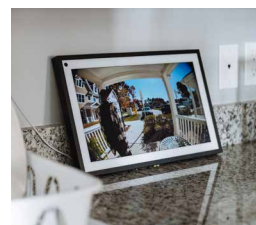


**"I like having a new home. [...] It's beautiful. And I'm happy here."**

*Alexis and her mother, Angela, in her apartment.*

## What are some examples of Assistive Technology?

Some uses of AT involve adapting products you're already familiar with to be more easily controlled, such as GPS devices, smart home devices (thermostats, lights, locks), and tablets like iPads. Other types of AT are engineered specifically for assistive purposes, like speech-generating devices and environmental control units. Both broaden the ways that individuals can interact with the world.



# A puzzle piece, not the whole picture.

AT brings an added level of safety, comfort and enjoyment to individuals with disabilities. Think of it as complementary to the work of a direct support professional, not a replacement. For Alexis, AT has improved many aspects of her life, such as:

## INDEPENDENCE

Devices like smart tools and environmental controls make it easier for Alexis to live independently and safely.

## PARTICIPATION

Alexis can engage more presently in learning, work and social activities.

## COMMUNICATION

AT devices improve her communication and have strengthened her connection with her family.

## PRODUCTIVITY

Tools like the smart induction stove and adaptive keyboards (iPad) help Alexis overcome barriers to learning, socializing and staying safe.

## It's not one-size fits all.

Different technologies are right for different people, and it's important to assess each person's situation before deciding on an AT solution. That process might look like:

### 1 Assessment

A thorough assessment by an AT specialist, healthcare professional or occupational therapist\* to determine specific needs.

### 2 Customization

Devices may need to be adapted to suit the user's particular requirements.

### 3 Training & Support

Users, their families and their support staff should learn how to operate devices and integrate them into daily life.

### 4 Trial & Evaluation

Testing different devices in the context of the individual's day-to-day life will help ensure the chosen technology is effective.

*\*In some cases, AT assessments are required to be conducted externally by OTs and PTs because they bring specialized knowledge of physical function, movement and independence.*

Talk to your case manager and visit [ct.gov/DDS](https://ct.gov/DDS) to learn more about Assistive Technology.