

***State Assistive Technology (AT)
Programs
and Funding Options for AT***

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Welcome to Maine!!!



Today's Objectives



- Learn about the federal AT Act
- Define and Review AT
- Learn about AT State Program Services & Resources
- Review Funding options
- Q & A

Kathy's Bio

- **Occupational Therapist**
- **Certified AT Professional (*RESNA.org*)**
- **35+ years of practice in Maine**
- **Serves on:**
 - **Maine OT License Board, Chair (just ended 2 terms)**
 - **Maine *AgrAbility* Project Advisory Council**
 - **Maine AT Consortia**
 - **Maine Medicaid Advisory Committee**
 - **KVCC OTA Program Advisory Council**
 - **Southern Maine Transition Committee**
 - **State IT Advisory Committee**

Important Maine Facts

- Borders NH, Canada and the Ocean
- Population 1.3 million people
- 16 Counties
- 22 Cities
- 424 Towns
- York, America's First Chartered Town in 1641
- 3,500 Miles of Coastline
- 6000 Lakes & Ponds
- Mt. Katahdin is the End of the AT @ 5268 ft above sea level
- 17 Million Acres of Forest
- 65 Lighthouses
- Acadia National Park
- 120 Million Lbs - Annual Lobster catch
- 104 Million Lbs - Blueberries annually



Some Laws that Impact AT

- Rehab Act of 1973/Section 504
- IDEA, amended in 2004
- *AT Act of 1989, amended in 2004*
- Americans with Disabilities Act 1990
- WIOA: Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act



Maine CITE



- **Maine's State AT Act Program**
- **Created by the Federal AT Act in 1989 (amended in 2004)**
- **There are AT Act Programs in every state**
 - www.ATAPorg.org
 - www.at3center.net
- **Visit www.mainecite.org**
 - **Webinars recorded on our site**
 - **"Apps as AT" page**
 - **Paying for AT & Funding Resources**
 - **AT Providers in Maine**

The Mission of Maine CITE

To improve access to & the acquisition
of AT by people of all ages, all disabilities in the
areas of:

Education

Employment

Community Living

IT & Telecommunications

AT Act Program Services Include:

- **Public Awareness, Outreach, Information and Assistance**
- **Device Demonstrations**
- **Device Loans --- *try before you buy ...save \$\$\$***
- **Device Reuse --- discount buying of used AT, DME**
 - **AT Exchange and AT Recycling**
- **AT Training --- workshops, conferences, webinars**
- **Technical Assistance on AT**
- **State Coordination and Collaboration --- State AT Consortia**
- **State Financing**
 - **Alternative Financing Cash Loans, *\$\$\$ to buy AT***
 - **AT Buying Co-ops**

Maine's AT Partners

- State Collaboration is essential in Maine
- Maine CITE has supported the *AT Consortia* since 1990s
- Meets quarterly
- Meetings Showcase new AT, training events & providers

Spurwink- ALLTECH

Pine Tree Society

CARES

UM Farmington

AgrAbility Maine

mPower Financial Loan Program

IRIS Network

State BRS

Alpha One, CIL

Assistive Technology is.....

- An *AT Device* is any item, device, system, piece of equipment, or product -- acquired commercially or customized -- that is used to increase, maintain or improve the functional capabilities of a person with a disability
- *AT Services* help people learn about AT *options* & decide if the AT will *benefit* them

Technology is Universal in our Lives!!

The Benefits of AT.....

***Using AT can facilitate,
maintain, increase, maximize
learning, safety, function,
success & self esteem, work productivity,
mobility, independence,
social & community connections.....***

AT Enhances Function....

- **Learning new tasks**
- **Physical interaction with environment**
- **Communication**
- **Independence & safety**
- **Participation & social interaction**
- **Vocational potential & productivity @ work**
- **Simplification of work tasks**
- **Organization skill, Concentration & cognition**
- **Endurance & stamina**

Maine CITE Resources - check them out!

- www.mainecite.org Maine AT Info source
- www.at4maine.org Maine AT Inventory for Demo and Loan services
- www.getatstuff.com Regional AT Exchange
- www.maine-aem.org Maine Info on Accessible Educational Materials

Maine CITE Training Events

www.maine cite.org/training

- **Driver Assessments**
- **AT: Empowering People to Live at Home**
- **AT to Support Independent Living**
- **Adapted Telephone/telecommunications**
- **Smart Home –Remote Monitoring**
- **AT for Medication Management**
- **Apps for Blind and Low Visions Users**
- **AT for People with Brain Injury**
- ***Keep Farming Using Technology Solutions***
- ***UD on the Farm: Maine AgrAbility Program***

AT Reuse & Recycling



Donate, Buy & Sell used AT

www.getATstuff.com

more recycling of AT...

Refurbishing/Reusing/selling AT
ALLTECH, 892 Riverside St, Portland
Phone 207-535-2017

- www.alphaonenow.org
- Uncle Henrys... "senior solutions"
- towns, churches, civic groups
- www.passitoncenter.org (national list)



AT can be Low Tech >>> to High Tech

No cost – no mechanics

Cost more – complex features computerized



Low
Tech

Mid
Tech

High
Tech

Low cost – less complex, may involve some mechanics or electronics.

There are endless AT Devices!!

- **Smart Devices: phones, tablets**
- **Computer hardware & software**
 - adapted switches/access aids
- **Alerting devices**
- **Braille & Low Vision devices**
- **Prosthetics & orthotics**
- **Standing & walking aids**
- **Manual and power wheelchairs (power rim device)**
- **Communication devices, SGD devices**
- **Adapted sports/recreation equipment**

More AT



- Adapted cars - vans with lifts
- Home access/mods
 - ramps, lifts, stair glides, elevators, walk in shower, flooring
- Smart home automation
- Wearable tech
 - Hearing aides & glasses
 - Fitness devices
 - Smart watches
 - Tracker devices

What AT do you or your clients use?

What Apps are you using as AT?

AT for Managing Medications

- **Pill box / med cassette**
- **Organizers with Alarms**
- **Alternative medication container caps**
- **Magnifiers for reading labels Large print**
- **Dispensers with remote monitoring**
- **Smartphone & smart watch reminders**











Funding...."it's all about the money"



- Funding is the key issue for the consumer!!
- Professionals need to work with consumers to help find purchasing/funding options for AT
- Funding is the challenge!

...more on Funding!

- ***Beware!...*** AT Funding is always changing
- Funding decisions are based on each individual's *need & eligibility*
 - Health insurances, state Medicaid = medical necessity
 - Veterans
 - Special Ed
 - Vocational Rehab
- Learn about the documentation requirements for each funder— *do your homework!*

Paying for AT

- **Social Security Administration Programs**
 - PASS Plans
 - 1619B Program
 - Ticket to Work
- **State Vocational Rehab Services**
- **Special Education....ages 0 thru 20**
 - *Must Consider AT....Document AT in the IEP*
 - *Must have a Transition plan for students leaving HS*
- **Health Insurances....Medicaid (Maine Care)**
 - **must document medical necessity**
 - **OT Policy (Maine Medicaid Section 68)**



Maine has Medicaid Waivers

- **All states can create Waivers- work with federal CMS**
- **Enables people with disabilities to live in the community (avoid more costly nursing homes) \$\$\$**
- **Funding for AT used at home for safety & independence**
- **Funding for home based AT & remote monitoring**
- **Maine CITE is working to develop more providers of AT services**

Homeward Bound Program Federal “Money Follows the Person” Program

<http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/oads/trainings-resources/initiatives/homeward-bound.html>

- **Maine program that funds services for people to plan & move out of a nursing home >>> back into the community**
- **Pays for AT, AT training & home monitoring**
- **In the last 4 yrs, more that 115 people have moved home**
- **> 90% of these people use some type of AT**

- **Financial Cash Loans/personal financing**
 - **Maine's *mPower* Loan Program** www.mpowerloans.org
 - **The Digital Credit Union** www.dcu.org
 - **Financial Loan Programs in the States: 43 of them!**
 - www.at3center.net/stateprograms
- **Muscular Dystrophy Association**
- **MS Society**
- **IL Grants thru Alpha One CIL**
- **Robbie Foundation (ME)**
- **Travis Roy Foundation (SCI)**
- **DiDanato Foundation (ME)**



AT Resources....

- www.extension.umaine.edu/agrability
- www.agrability.org
- www.at3center.net
- www.fctd.org family center for technology and disability
- www.wheelchairnet.org
- www.abledata.org
- www.assistivetech.net
- www.afb.org
- www.atia.org

AT Resources

- www.jan.wvu.edu
- www.Disabilityinfo.gov
- www.usbln.org
- www.RESNA.org
- www.abledata.org
- www.passonline.org
- www.workrerc.org

Job Accommodation Network

Business Leadership Network

Rehab Engineering Society N. America

lists thousands of AT devices

details on PASS program

**Rehab Engineering Research Center on
Workplace Accommodation**

Take Aways.....

- **AT is universal in our lives, why not the lives of our clients?**
- **AT can impact safety, independence & productivity**
- **The AT market is always changing**
- **AT is available & affordable, “off the shelf”**
- **AT Resources are always developing**
- **Keep Exploring Smart Home technologies as AT**
- **Collaboration is Key!!**

Thank you!



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