

# A Guide for Developing, Maintaining and Using Play & Assistive Technology Lending Libraries

## **Purpose of a Lending Library System**

Families enrolled in Early Intervention Programs need supports and services that will assist them in helping their child lead a happy and productive life. Service providers have increasingly used assistive technology (AT) for this purpose. Devices ranging from battery-adapted switch toys and adapted spoon handles to communication aides and computer systems are making a significant difference in the lives of children with disabilities and their families. With the use of AT, children can experience more control over their environment, participate more actively in a wide array of daily activities, and are able to demonstrate what they like and what they can do independently and with others. The natural routines of families dictate what and when technology can help.

The primary activity of the young child is to play. Through play children discover the world around them and how they impact that world. When children are involved in play, they are intrinsically motivated and are active participants having fun! Children demonstrate their optimal abilities as they interact with materials and control the course of play. Children with disabilities need to experience these same play opportunities but may require supports to assist them to interact more effectively.

Assistive technology takes many forms for young children with disabilities. Adapted play materials assist children in accessing a wider variety of toys in ways that build on what they like and what they can do; positioning supports help children interact with developmentally appropriate materials; communication aids enhance social interactions of family members- making play more fun for everyone!

When AT solutions are identified which support specific family outcomes, they must be made immediately available. Because children grow and change so rapidly during their first three years, the needs of the family reflect this ongoing transformation. When the need for adapted toys or positioning equipment that will promote exploration and development is indicated for a child, the family cannot wait months for a purchase and delivery process. Appropriate AT must be immediately available to a family on a continuous basis as their child develops.

# Assistive Technology Lending Library Action Plan

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The following items are designed to help you identify what needs to be accomplished in order to provide Assistive Technology to infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families. This list is divided into three major areas: setup, inventory organization and loan process.

## LIBRARY SETUP

- \_\_\_\_ 1. Site for AT items; space includes storage and display areas for inventory.
- \_\_\_\_ 2. Staff roles are defined and assigned including AT inventory, loan tracking and maintenance system
- \_\_\_\_ 3. A system to ensure the cleaning and maintenance of inventory items is identified by the Lending Library; disinfectant has been ordered.
- \_\_\_\_ 4. Office supplies to maintain the inventory and tracking system are purchased (i.e. file folders, file cabinet, computer database, etc.)
- \_\_\_\_ 5. Other: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## INVENTORY ORGANIZATION

- \_\_\_\_ 1. An adequate inventory of assistive technologies is available.
- \_\_\_\_ 2. An AT inventory ordering system is in place (\$, who, what, how)
- \_\_\_\_ 3. System to identify needed Assistive Technologies exists. Care is taken to ensure a range of items supporting a variety of child needs is considered. All AT categories are represented.
- \_\_\_\_ 4. Adaptation materials are readily available to be used
  - attachers, extenders, stabilizers, confinement aids
  - batteries, jack adapters, cables, etc.
- \_\_\_\_ 5. An inventory plan exists including:
  - \_\_\_\_ a numbering system for each item as it is received
  - \_\_\_\_ labeling system is identified
  - \_\_\_\_ identifying staff member(s) responsible for system
  - \_\_\_\_ identifying the item per AT category
- \_\_\_\_ 6. Log or Database information minimally includes the following information on each AT item: item, vendor, AT category, and cost
- \_\_\_\_ 7. (Optional) Video and/or other cameras, tripods, film are available.
- \_\_\_\_ 8. Other: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## REFERRAL/LOAN/TRACKING PROCESS

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Library Loan procedures have been established
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. When items are returned, a system is in place which includes:
  - \_\_\_\_\_ item is checked in on the General Library Loan Log/  
database and on the AT Borrowed form
  - \_\_\_\_\_ the item is cleaned and prepared (repaired, batteries  
replaced as needed, etc.) for re-loan
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. A plan for selection of potential AT items by service providers exists and includes:
  - \_\_\_\_\_ SP uses *AT Borrowed Form* to select a variety of items  
judged to meet the family outcomes identified by initial  
interview
  - \_\_\_\_\_ AT items are provided to family who tries them out with  
their child and provider staff
  - \_\_\_\_\_ strategies for their use are offered by team members.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ family selects "best" AT items for their child to meet  
stated outcomes. Items are loaned and recorded on the *AT  
Borrowed Form*.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. A system is in place for the actual "loan" of the AT and includes:
  - \_\_\_\_\_ family signature on all forms
  - \_\_\_\_\_ SP records AT item, and tracking # on *AT Borrowed form*
  - \_\_\_\_\_ bags are available for families to carry loaned items
  - \_\_\_\_\_ folders for each family to keep include *AT Borrowed*  
sheets, brochure/intro letters
  - \_\_\_\_\_ the items are returned and recorded on the General  
Library Loan Log/database
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. A plan exists for follow-up sessions, including follow-up phone calls for:
  - \_\_\_\_\_ information on the items usefulness is obtained by SP and is  
recorded on the *Follow-Up Interview form/AT Borrowed Form*
  - \_\_\_\_\_ SP asks family to generate new play outcomes on a new *AT  
Borrow Form*
  - \_\_\_\_\_ SP schedules a time and place for the next play session
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. A plan for ongoing refinement of the AT/Play service process and procedures is  
in place.