

Reflections for the Occupational Therapy Assistant

Need help with AT and do not know where to start? Every state has a federally funded AT program, so start with your state AT center! Keywords to help find resources include the following: AT state funding, reimbursement for children with disabilities AT services and devices, your specific state, pediatric AT. Funding of assistive devices and services is constantly changing and may not be consistent across the nation.

The following websites provide useful information about pediatric-based AT and occupational therapy:

- *Abledata*: A national database providing objective information on for approximately 40,000 assistive devices. Provides information on how to contact manufacturers or distributors of these products (<http://www.abledata.com>).
- *American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA)*: The official website of the American Occupational Therapy Association. AOTA provides literature and information on AT-related issues and offers a technology special interest section, which publishes a quarterly newsletter introducing or discussing current and upcoming technology (<http://www.aota.org>).
- *The National Public Website on Assistive Technology*: Current information on AT, adaptive environments, and community resources (assistivetechnet.net).
- *Infinite Potential Through Assistive Technology (Infinitec)*: A joint effort of the United Cerebral Palsy Associations, Inc. and the United Cerebral Palsy Association of Greater Chicago (<http://www.infinitec.org/>).
- *Learning Disabilities Online*: Provides an interactive guide regarding learning disabilities for children, parents, and teachers (<http://www.ldonline.org>).
- *MassMATCH (Massachusetts Assistive Technology)*: MassMATCH is the Massachusetts initiative to Maximize Assistive Technology in Consumers' Hands. MassMATCH's mission is to promote the use of AT and AT services to enhance the independence of people with disabilities, enabling equal participation in all occupations (<http://www.massmatch.org>).
- *Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Technology Society of North America (RESNA)*: A professional organization that aims to promote advocacy, research, and education of people with disabilities through the use of technology. Includes information on certification courses (<http://www.resna.org>).

- *University of Colorado Assistive Technology Partners (ATP)*: ATP's purpose is to improve access to an acquisition of AT devices and services for individuals in education, employment, community living, information technology, and telecommunications (<http://www.ucdenver.edu/academics/colleges/medicalschool/programs/atp/Pages/AssistiveTechnologyPartners.aspx>).
- *Wisconsin Assistive Technology Initiative (WATI)*: A statewide project to help all school districts develop or improve their AT services; provides good resources and links to other AT-related sites (<http://www.wati.org>).

Other useful sources for AT products, education, and services include conferences and expositions, where vendors, dealers, and AT specialists display their services and advertise their products. The following is a list of national conferences and expositions that include pediatric AT:

- *Abilities Expo*: National and regional expositions on independent and assisted living products and services (<http://abilitiesexpo.com>).
- *American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA)*: Annual national occupational therapy conference (<http://www.aota.org>).
- *Assistive Technology Industry Association (ATIA)*: Annual national conferences for the East Coast (<http://www.atia.org>).
- *California State University, Northridge*: Center on Disabilities international conference on technology and persons with disabilities (<http://www.csun.edu/cod>).
- *Closing the Gap*: Annual conference on computer technology in special education and rehabilitation (<http://closingthegap.com>).
- *Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Technology Society of North America (RESNA)*: Annual AT convention and exposition (<http://www.resna.org>).

Occupational therapy practitioners interested in becoming specialized in evaluating and providing AT services and devices may receive further certification through various private organizations, such as the Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Technology Society of North America (RESNA) (<http://www.resna.org>), which offers a certification program for AT specialists.

SUMMARY

This chapter provided an overview of the concepts and functional applications of AT within the scope of occupational therapy practice, including the occupational