

AT Topical Discussion Notes

AT Interagency Meeting

February 8, 2010

• **Funding AT**

Issues: Resources in general are scarce, making funding equipment more difficult

Solutions:

- CATO, Coalition for AT in Oregon, online application at otap-oregon.org (limited funding, mostly for AT needed at home, nonschool activities)
- ARRA (Stimulus) Funds currently available through school districts for AT and professional development
- Lion's Club
- Internal fundraisers in district: Chocolart at Douglas ESD
- Local Hospitals
- Fred Meyer and other large businesses
- Donorschoose.org
- Casinos
- Hewlett-Packard, Intel, possibly for computers and printers
- AT&T
- Gates Foundation may be a resource
- OTAP library has books on funding AT
- Amazon also has books on grant-writing
- Oregon Public Utilities Commission: Portnuff Project coming soon in March. Will provide AC devices for use with telephones.
- National Cristina Foundation (used technology)
- Disability-specific agencies, e.g. UCP, Vision organizations
- Google search of "Assistive Technology Funding"
- Teachers' Unions
- Oregon Education Association (OEA) has \$100 grants to members, with proper justification
- Credit Unions
- Pepsi grants for "fresh ideas"

• **AT Implementation**

Issues:

- Getting families to understand and use AT at home by taking small steps, e.g. suggestion to try using the device during dinner.

Solutions, what works:

- SETT meetings with staff and parents encourage all involved to "buy in" to using the device
- Demonstrate success with device
- Front-load AT consult and support at beginning, write on IEP as # times the consultation will occur during the near term, (e.g. 4 visits in October, then monthly November through June)

- Good, explicit documentation to help facilitate the transition process, (e.g. instructions on use of AT, when AT is used, for what activities, etc.)
 - Document use of AT on IFSP Family page, Development page
 - Document impact if AT is removed, video especially powerful, especially for transition
 - Web pages re AT options to raise awareness of AT
 - Pre-AT users need to know categories, social engagement level, motor skills, etc.
 - Computer use in ECSE classrooms: Choice stations, wheeled cart with a drape
 - Work on one thing at a time
- **Logistics when a device travels between home and school**
 - Issues:
 - Documented agreements are needed for when family-owned equipment is sent to school, district-owned equipment travels to the home, or when family is reluctant to send privately-owned equipment to school for use in instruction.
 - Solutions:
 - Develop a good, clear form.
 - Delineate responsibilities of school and home, who will pay for repairs, etc.
 - Recommendations:
 - OTAP should develop a form, approved by ODE.
 - St. Helens, Coos Bay and PPS have forms to use as samples.

- **New AT Applications**

Kurzweil 3000, network vs USB version (USB preferred since IT doesn't have to unlock it for use, avoids issue of losing the expensive USB version)

New trends in digital text books

Adobe Reader has a Read Aloud function

Dragon Naturally Speaking 10 is better than older versions,

Audible books at Audible.com: Can order 20 books per year, (some software/hardware compatibility problems)

Intel Reader: camera that captures text, reads aloud.

Sony Reader vs Kindle: Sony highlights text, can use stylus to make notes. Kindle has Text To Speech, but some publishers lock this on Kindle files.

Glacier Reader is an ebook format. Can download to an iphone, enlarge text, etc.

Smart Pen syncs notes to computer

- **Universal Design for Learning/RTI**

Issue:

- How does AT fit into RTI (Response to Intervention)?
- RTI is emerging in many districts, UDL is lesser known.
- One district had a grant for laptops for middle school students, but laptops were lost when grant ran out.
- Challenges around support, funding, training of personnel.

Solutions:

- Awareness training will be important.

- **Training Modes (online, webinars, site-based, etc.)**

Issues:

- Mary-It's hard to get people together. When you do, you try to get a lot of things to people at one time. It would be nicer to have things in small chunks.
- Mary Jo- We teach kids in small chunks but we don't teach adults that way.
- Jill-If we work in team meetings, their attention is so scattered that they can't attend
- Constantly doing training over and over is a challenge
- Sustainable training-can go online and read.
- People receiving training- their time is limited and scarce. Need to be able to receive training at a time when they are receptive to it.
- The numbers of people coming to training are getting smaller and smaller. They aren't being released any more. Only training we do now is in-house for the districts in the places where they are needing it.
- Interest is there but attendance is bad. MORE CHILD specific for a few teachers.
- This issue applies to anything you do over and over again.

Solutions:

- Video training-do it yourself. More step by step.
- Get IAs up to speed. Video training is not always effective. Address learner styles and learner experience. No opportunities for IAs to go. IAs might get pd units.
- Whether it's video or webinar, need printable cheat sheet to accompany the training. Important that they use that cheat sheet during the training.
- Need training on how to do a webinar!!!
- Classes on how to teach an online class
- Need a resource list of videos that are available online, Never forget to do a quick search of YouTube, TeacherTube, etc.
- Edutopia-need to gather the info
- Social bookmarking
- Need to offer the policy manual and other resources on the OTAP site.
 - Policies and procedures
 - Videos of kids
 - Cheat sheets
 - How to use it videos

Recommendations:

- What would it take to get the AT Collection for the state? Atomic learning
- Post sample district procedures and good ideas on the OTAP site
- Training cheat sheets posted
- Video sources-resource list of videos that are available
- Vendor webinars and videos
- Training on doing webinars and online classes
- New Online classes on how to do webinars

- Lots of links to success stories.
- Looking at learning theory-how do adults learn and how do we use that information in our own training.
- What's the personal human connection that's needed? How do they connect to the virtual information.
- Use our Savvy high school students to collect the information. Leadership classes. LD students or resource room students.
- Moodle for a Virtual Team with link to videos, AT policies, IEP planning, teacher training.
- Alternative strategies for training.
- Create or find advice for IT people about AT and their role in it. Who has done this successfully?
- Connect to other IT people

Issue: Increasing interest in AT, AIM, UDL, but less time for training

Solutions:

- Distance learning strategies, how to create training components in smaller bites.
- Lots of resources available, but need a list of resources, e.g. where to find webinars, videos of kids using AT, online training opportunities e.g. Atomic Learning.
- "How To Training" is needed on how to do webinars, online classes, etc.

- **AT for 504 Students**

Issues:

- Students on 504 plans may have AT needs.
- Implementation of 504 Plans can be a problem.
- Students on 504 Plans don't have access to NIMAS files since they're not included under IDEA.

Solutions:

- Some IDEA students may be more like a 504 student when given AT.
- 504 Plans have significant weight and must be implemented since failure to implement may result in loss of district's federal funds. Office of Civil Rights has authority in 504 cases.