ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

Assistive technology is an umbrella term for tools that help increase, maintain, or improve a person's cognition, communication, hearing, mobility, self-care or vision. The goal of assistive technology is to promote individuals' health and well-being, and to include or promote their participation in daily activities.

Communication: Augmentative Alternative Communication (AAC) improves an individual's ability to express themselves without relying on verbal speech. Among the many AAC strategies, aided systems, such as picture boards, speech-generating devices, and smartphone applications, are invaluable tools for fostering communication.

Mobility technology assists people with limited physical functions, and may include walkers, wheelchairs, canes, and orthotic devices. It may also include a special mouse or keyboard for someone who has limited hand mobility.

Hearing assistive technology can dramatically improve the life of person with hearing challenges. Assistive technology varies depending on a person's needs, and can include caption phones or apps, hearing aids, alerting devices connected to the doorbell, etc.

Types of Assistive Technology

Vision assistive technology help individuals with vision loss or disabilities. Some examples of these assistive aids could include a screen reader, screen magnifier, braille watches, and braille printers

Cognitive aids help individuals complete functional activities in the natural environment. Some examples include voice recorders, electrical assistive devices for memory cues, audio note-takers, and many other tools.

Self-care is an individual's ability to complete daily living or personal activities. Self-care assistive technologies include bathing, grooming, and toileting chairs and adaptive feeding utensils.

Key Facts

- Individuals with different disabilities and the aging population can benefit from assistive technology.
- Many individuals who use assistive technology may need more than one type of aid.
- Many individuals who need assistive technology do not have access to it.
- Funding sources vary depending an individual's disability and assistive technology needs.