

WVATS

West Virginia Assistive Technology System Newsletter



Fun with Assistive Technology

Assistive technology (AT) is more than daily living aids. It also goes beyond home, school or work. AT can also be used for fun, sports, recreation and leisure activities.

Closed captioning or audio descriptions for movies are examples of AT for recreation and leisure. There are also adapted sports equipment or controls for video games. The most commonly used are sports and gardening aids, toys and games.

Below are devices that could help someone participate in recreation activities.

Swimming: Floatation devices can help people with limited mobility stay active in the water. Pool lifts, ramps and rails can be used to make pools more accessible.

Games: Large print and braille cards can help people with low vision or blindness continue to play card games. Card holders can assist those who may have difficulty holding a hand of cards. A switch spinner can help those who cannot spin a spinner or roll dice for a game.

Playgrounds: Playgrounds with accessible equipment and firm and stable surfaces can make the area accessible to all. Adapted balls that beep or jingle to allow anyone with vision problems the chance to play in a ball game.

Exercise: Adapted exercise equipment allows people to work out from a seated position.

Gardening: Gardening tools that attach to your forearm provide support if grasping tools is difficult. Other devices help move and empty a filled 5 gallon bucket with ease. Raised beds may make it easier to maintain a garden.

Outdoor activities: Adapted bikes and kayaks provide chances to be active in the outdoors. There are also sports specific wheelchairs. Walking, biking and beach trails made from firm and stable materials can make those areas more accessible.

For more information about recreation and leisure assistive technology, call WVATS at **800-841-8436**, email wvats@hsc.wvu.edu, or find us on Facebook www.facebook.com/wvats.



Powerful Tools



Three Wheeled Cruiser

With its non-standard steering, this steel-framed trike reduces shoulder and arm stress. It features an adjustable frame, hand brakes, a padded seat and a safety flag. The trike has a weight capacity of 220 lbs. There is an additional release of liability form that must be signed to borrow this item.



BeamO

The BeamO is a giant frisbee-like toy made of soft material and foam padding. The BeamO is designed for ease of use and catchability.

Golf Club Set

The set of golf clubs contains six different clubs ranging from a putter that is 22" long to a driver that is 29.5" long. The size of the clubs can make golf accessible from a wheelchair.



Wooden Peg Chess Set

This is a traditional black and white wooden chess set. The chess pieces have pegs that extend .5" downward from the bottom of the chess pieces. Each space on the chess board has a hole in which these pegs can be placed. This allows for one to move or bump the chess board without losing the positions of the pieces on it.



BOOM'R Beeper Ball

This ball can be thrown, bounced or kicked. A battery-powered electronic beeper gives auditory cues allowing people with limited vision to join in the action.

Marble Run

The Marble Run construction set is switch adapted for accessible play. When the switch is activated, music plays and the marbles are carried to the top of the tower. From there the marbles shoot down and around bridges, columns, spinning wheels and funnels.



Everyone Can Play

West Virginia is known for tourism and outdoor activities. The summer offers many opportunities to enjoy being outside. Assistive technology (AT) can be used to make outdoor adventures safe and accessible.

Hiking can be a great way to see sights and enjoy nature. AT tools for hiking are built to be sturdy for outdoor use.

- Off-road manual or powered wheelchair will allow accessing rougher terrain.
- Hand cycles are also a way to enjoy the dirt paths.
- Hiking crutches and outdoor walkers are also available.

Rafting and kayaking are popular in the mountain state. Many people do not know that there is AT to help get on the water.

- Universal seating is available for canoes and kayaks that provide cushion and supports to riders.
- Adaptive wrists grips help with holding on to paddles and adaptive pivots help with paddling.
- Adapted rafts, such as the Creature Craft, are designed to keep the paddler in the boat and out of the water. A flip puts the raft on its side, but leaves the rider out of the water. It is easily tipped back into the upright position.

Horseback riding can also be made possible with AT. AT is available for grooming, tacking, controlling the horse and riding. These devices help people with disabilities interact with horses through riding, grooming, touching or just being near the corral.

- The Riding Hippo-Helper is a positioning device that stabilizes a rider. It helps with trunk and upper body control. Ladder reins make grasping reins easier for those who have less motor control.
- SafetySure Walker Belt has multiple handgrips for side walkers to use as support.

A disability does not need to limit a person's ability to enjoy the outdoors. With a little help from AT, everyone can play!



Know Your Voting Rights



Having a disability does not impact a person's right to vote. With election season underway,

it is important to understand your voting rights. Every polling place should be fully accessible. This includes parking spaces and routes into and inside the building.

You can bring someone to help you cast your vote. Let the poll worker know and fill out an 'assisted voter form.' If the polling place is not accessible, contact the County Clerk's office to ask about voting from the car.

Every polling place should have an accessible voting machine. These machines can help people who are blind, have mobility limitations or have trouble reading. The machines have a touch screen interface. They also have Braille-embossed navigation buttons. The machines have the ability to read the ballot out loud.

For more information, contact the Office of the Secretary of State at **866-767-8683** or Disability Rights of West Virginia at **800-950-5250**.



The Miracle League

The Miracle League Organization helps children and adults with disabilities play baseball. The teams play on fields made of rubber that allow the use of wheelchairs and other assistive technology (AT). The league allows athletes the chance to make new friends, build self-esteem, be treated like any other athlete and have fun. For more information or to find out if there is a league near you, visit www.themiracleleague.net.



Did You Know?

United States residents who have a disability can get a free lifetime National Parks and Federal Recreational Lands Access Pass. The pass provides admittance to more than 2,000 recreation sites. Passes can be obtained at a federal recreation site or by mail for a \$10 fee. For more information, can visit store.usgs.gov/access-pass.



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The project described was supported by Grant Number 90AG0011 from the Administration for Community Living. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the Administration for Community Living (ACL), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

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The Center for Excellence in Disabilities (CED) is designated as the State's lead agency for assistive technology services.