

## An Individualized Education Program

An Individualized Education Program (IEP) is an educational plan that youth with disabilities from kindergarten to 12th grade create with their family and school staff. Your IEP includes details about your disability and ways the school can help you get what you need to be a successful student. It describes ways you learn best, how your teachers can help you, and what types of assistive technology you need to succeed in school.

## Assistive Technology (AT)

Assistive technology (AT) can be as simple as a pencil grip or a pair of eye glasses. It can also be a wheelchair, speech software or a calculator. It is whatever technology, software, app or device you need to fully participate at school like everyone else. Some students use AT to help them with their math homework, talk to their teacher and classmates, or get around their school independently. Figuring out what type of assistive technology works for you can take time, but there are ways you can try it before asking the school or your parents to buy it for you.

## Device Lending Library

There are Device Lending Libraries in different locations across California. They provide short term (30 day) loans to people who want to try out a piece of assistive technology that might help them in school, at home or in the community. Device Lending Libraries have nothing do with school, but they exist to help you figure out what might work for you before you ask your school to get it for you.

## Assistive Technology in Your IEP

Assistive technology can help you accomplish your educational goals. For example, if you have a learning disability and understand the steps needed to do a math problem but often get your numbers mixed up, you might need to use a calculator to confirm your answers. Maybe you are in a class that requires you to give a speech but you have a difficult time speaking and don't think you'll be able to do it. You could use an iPad with a speech app or some other augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) device to assist you so that you can give a speech too.

It is important to know what assistive technology works for you and how it can help you be a better student and fully participate with the rest of your classmates. The assistive technology that you use for one class might be helpful in all of your classes or you might need different devices for each subject. It all depends on what is going to help you succeed.

Once you know what kind of assistive technology you need, you can bring it up at your IEP meeting, discuss it, share how it works for you and ask your school district to get it for you to use for school. You will need to include in your written IEP what the assistive technology device is and how it helps you. As you get older and move up a grade, your IEP will change and so might your assistive technology needs. You have the right to change your IEP so that it keeps working for you.

Visit the Ability Tools website to learn more about AT and the IEP process:

[abilitytools.org](http://abilitytools.org)

Learn how youth with disabilities are connecting, organizing and educating other youth around the state on issues they care about:

[YODisabledProud.org](http://YODisabledProud.org)

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*Find devices for sale or free:*

**[exchange.abilitytools.org](http://exchange.abilitytools.org)**  
**(800) 390-2699**



(800) 390-2699

| [www.AbilityTools.org](http://www.AbilityTools.org)

| [YoDisabledProud.org](http://YoDisabledProud.org)

