



# DIRECTIONS

## *Technology in Special Education*

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### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT OF 1997

By Susan Goodman, Esq.

*Question: My child needs a more sophisticated communication device than the one he currently uses. Is the school district responsible for providing my child with a more appropriate device?*

Answer: If the device is needed for a student to benefit from his/her educational program as determined by the team developing the student's individual education plan (IEP), it must be provided at no cost to the parent. In addition, the new law says that assistive technology devices and services must be considered when developing an IEP. Since evaluation is considered an assistive technology service, the school district is obligated to consider whether a student needs an AT evaluation or reevaluation.

*Question: Is reevaluation of a student still required every three years?*

Answer: Yes, reevaluation is required at least once every three years and more often if the parent or teacher requests it. However, under the new law an IEP team or other "qualified professionals" can decide that no additional data is needed to confirm eligibility and therefore, not conduct a reevaluation. The school district must notify the parents of this determination and the parent has the right to request an evaluation. If the school district refuses to conduct the evaluation, the parents may get an independent evaluation at the school district's expense.

*Question: My child has been diagnosed with a learning disability. In addition, he has some behavior problems which keep him from learning as well as I think he can. The teacher wants to move my son to another classroom, but I think that if his behavior problems were dealt with properly, this wouldn't be necessary. What can I do?*

Answer: You should request that your son be evaluated for any possible social or behavior problems. After such an evaluation is completed, the IEP team should reconvene. According to the new law, IEP teams must consider when behavior impedes learning and others strategies, interventions and supports to address that behavior.

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*Question: I want to put my child in a private school because the school district refuses to provide the services that his Doctor thinks that he needs. Can I get the school district to pay the private school tuition?*

**Answer:** If your school is refusing to provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE) in a reasonable period, a hearing officer or court may order reimbursement for tuition at a private school. However, there are steps that you should take to increase your chances of tuition reimbursement:

At your child's IEP meeting, request that the appropriate services be provided. Have documentation ready to support your claim for specific services. If the school refuses to provide the appropriate services, explain to the IEP team that you are rejecting the placement and inform them of your intent to place your child in a private school.

If holding an IEP meeting is not practicable, give written notice to the school of your concerns and your intent to make a private school placement.

If the school district notifies you of intent to evaluate your child in writing (with a reasonable statement of purpose for the evaluation), you must make your child available for that evaluation.

Notice does not have to be given if the following circumstances are present:

1) a parent is illiterate and cannot write in English; 2) compliance with the notice requirement would likely result in physical or serious emotional harm to the child; 3) the school prevented the parent(s) from giving the notice; and, 4) parents did not

receive notice from the LEA of their obligation to provide notice of intent to make a unilateral private school placement.

*Question: How much parent involvement is required?*

**Answer:** The law envisions active parental involvement in all phases of the student's educational program including evaluation, planning and placement. Parents should be vigilant in monitoring implementation of their child's program and the progress s/he is making.

*Question: I have heard that a student can be removed from the classroom if s/he is considered a danger to self or others for a period of three months! Is this correct and what does it mean?*

**Answer:** A student can be removed to an "interim alternative educational" setting by a hearing officer for 45 school days (11 weeks) if the hearing officer determines that the school has proved by substantial evidence that "maintaining the current placement of the child is substantially likely to result in injury to the child or others." In making this determination, the hearing officer must:

Consider the appropriateness of the student's placement;

Consider whether the public agency has made reasonable efforts to minimize the risk of harm in the child's current placement, including the use of supplementary aids and services; and,

Determines that the interim alternative education setting selected enables the student to continue to participate in the general curriculum; continues to

*Please see IDEA on page 7*

# DIRECTIONS

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# Using the Computer as a Creative Thinking Tool

**Source: *Parent's Guide to the Computer as a Creative Thinking Tool (for Children Ages 3 to 8)*  
The Edmark Corporation**

<<<http://www.edmark.com>>>

The computer-like books, blocks, musical instruments, paints, clay or science kits-deserves a place in your family's collection of tools that promote exploration, discovery and creative thinking. The computer's capabilities make it a wonderful learning tool. The computer is infinitely patient. It takes the drudgery out of complex investigations and trial-and-error discovery. With well-designed interfaces that incorporate spoken instructions or graphical menus, the computer enables even very young children to explore independently. As flexible as the software you put in it, the computer can allow children to discover, formulate, investigate, design, express and entertain!

The software you choose determines the role your computer can take. A well-rounded library should have software from many of the categories listed below. The best educational software has growth potential-it doesn't become obsolete after a few hours of play. Many programs also include customizing options that enable parents to personalize activities to suit individual learning styles and preferences, and set multiple levels of difficulty to challenge children of different abilities.

At any level of difficulty good software lets kids work at their own pace. It presents variable play options so kids have control over how they learn. The best programs often have multiple modes of play, to

balance open-ended exploration with structured activities. If your child is too young to read, you'll need programs that feature spoken or graphical instructions, with lots of on-screen guidance. Young kids in particular love friendly animated characters who provide encouragement.

Your educational software library should be built with a plan in mind. Drill-and-practice programs develop basic skills, but often don't encourage the exploration and discovery that lay a foundation for creative thinking. Other types of programs-many of which you may already own-are better suited to helping your child build creative thinking skills; several are discussed below. The role you play, in posing questions and suggesting activities that build on a child's interest, can make a big difference. Your role, both as a coach and an audience, can encourage your child to pursue creative endeavors, and to explore new ideas and concepts.

## **Children's Writing Programs and Word Processors**

Writing programs allow children to express themselves, freeing them from the manual challenges of handwriting. As children write notes, letters, stories and poems, they build important creative communication skills.

There are several writing programs specifically designed for young

children. These programs feature simple word processing functionality, picture libraries and drawing tools, allowing children to combine pictures and text to tell their stories. Some of these programs also incorporate text and speech allowing children to hear what they've written.

## **Art and Graphics Programs**

Many programs encourage creativity by providing computer-based art tools. Youngsters can work with on-screen paint brushes, spray cans, pencils, color palettes, stamps, stickers, fractal designs and erasers to draw or paint on their "canvas." Kids can make and print signs, banners and pictures. Their creations can also be imported into word processors or desktop publishing programs, where they become illustrations for their own storybooks or picture essays. When you teach children how to combine the artwork they create in graphics programs with a word processing tool, you open up a new avenue for their creativity.

Computers enable children to make more sophisticated artwork than they might be able to manually. This increased ability enhances self-confidence and encourages further exploration. Advanced tools, and the ease with which changes can be made, also encourage more exploration of artistic activities.

*Please see COMPUTER on page 10*

# ATFSCP Notes

## The Assistive Technology Funding and Systems Change Project

[http://www.ucpa.org/html/innovative/atfsc\\_index.html](http://www.ucpa.org/html/innovative/atfsc_index.html)

### Part C: INFANTS AND TODDLERS WITH DISABILITIES ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY POLICY

#### Part II: Elements #2 and #3

##### Critical Element #2:

The Provision of Training and Technical Assistance to a Child and His or Her Family, and to Service Providers and Other Individuals Who Are Significantly Involved in the Care and Education of Children with Disabilities Who are in Need of Assistive Technology

##### Devices and Services

*Who will receive training and technical assistance?*

Training and technical assistance should be provided to those persons who work directly with the child, including family members, daycare providers, and those persons responsible for implementing the child's IFSP.

*What kind of training and technical assistance should be provided to families and professionals?*

Training will vary depending on the types of assistive technology used by the child. Depending on the technology and on the role each family member and professional plays with the child, training and technical assistance will, at a minimum, encompass the following:

- information regarding the device and how it works;
- information about how the device is programmed or set up;
- information about how to recognize

and fix minor problems;

- information about how to incorporate the device into the child's home life;
- information about how to incorporate the device into the child's education program; and,
- information about maintenance and identification of repair services in the community

For example, if the child will be using an augmentative communication device, he or she will need to be taught how to use the device. The family and the speech pathologist will need to learn how to program the device and how to recognize and troubleshoot minor problems. If physical and/or occupational therapists are involved, they may need only basic training in how the device is used. If an educator is involved with the child, he or she will need to understand the purpose and function of the device and will need technical assistance to facilitate the child's use of the device as a substitute or supplement for speech during the education program.

*Who is responsible for providing training and technical assistance?*

Training should be written into the IFSP when appropriate. With a particular child, the assistive technology specialist or team should provide the training and technical assistance to the persons who will be working with the child. To the extent that related service providers such as occupational, physical, and speech/language therapists possess expertise

in assistive technology, they should also be included as trainers. Training should be provided by persons with expertise in early childhood education. In the absence of a technology team or specialist, the IFSP team should formalize arrangements with the supplier of the technology, the university affiliated program, the state's Alliance for Technology Access affiliate, or another other organization to provide the necessary training or follow up.

General training about assistive technology is often conducted by the state's technology program, Alliance for Technology Access affiliate, advocacy groups, school system assistive technology experts, and others.

*Who will pay the expenses for training for family members (e.g., travel, hotel, childcare)?*

When assistive technology is included on a child's IFSP, training should be provided at no cost, if the family lives in a birth mandate state where the child would, in the absence of Part C, be eligible for Part B services. Otherwise, expenses should be handled as they are for other Part C services (e.g., in accordance with a sliding scale). Scholarships or stipends could be set up to assist families in meeting expenses.

*What should be included in the training curriculum?*

The content of training will depend upon its purpose. For a child who has been evaluated and for whom assistive

technology has been included in the IFSP, training will focus on the use of that technology and the incorporation of that technology into the child's life. General training sessions could focus on the following:

- what assistive technology is and how it can benefit young children in areas such as seating and positioning, play, communication and learning;
- how to write IFSP goals that include the use of assistive technology, and how to integrate technology effectively into an educational program;
- funding sources for assistive technology;
- the special education process and the transition from Part C to Part B; and,
- specific types of assistive technology (e.g., seating and positioning devices, augmentative communication devices, adapted toys).

*Does the multidisciplinary team include professionals who are qualified in the area of assistive technology devices and services?*

It is essential that the multidisciplinary team include professionals who are knowledgeable about assistive technology devices and services, or that the team have ready access to such experts. An assistive technology specialist should be involved at the outset because other team members may not immediately recognize that a child could benefit from assistive technology.

Consideration should be given, at the state and federal levels, to requiring the multidisciplinary team to include an assistive technology specialist.

*Who should provide ongoing*

*technical assistance?*

The assistive technology specialist or team should be available to provide ongoing technical assistance. The state's Alliance for Technology Access affiliate may be another source of assistance. Additionally, states should consider setting up an assistive technology hotline, or a "warm line" (i.e. people call and leave a message which is returned within 24 hours) to handle routine questions about assistive technology. This could serve both as an effective introduction to assistive technology (e.g., an augmentative communication device is...) and as a useful component of follow up technical assistance (e.g., yes, it is normal for the device to make a funny noise when you turn it on...). Knowing that assistance is only a phone call away may make family members, daycare providers, and service providers feel more comfortable with the technology, especially when the child is just beginning to use it.

### **Critical Element #3:**

The Acquisition of Technology Devices For Children

*What does "acquisition" entail?*

Acquisition includes purchasing, leasing or any other manner in which the device may be provided.

*What are the timelines for procuring and providing services?*

Timelines for assessment and IFSP implementation are probably addressed in state regulations implementing Part C. There do not need to be separate timelines for assessment and provision of assistive technology services. However, if states do not have any timelines governing assessment and IFSP

implementation, they should revise their regulations to include such timelines. The timelines should be short to recognize the quickly-changing needs of infants and toddlers. The absolute outside timeline should be the timeline the state uses for Part B services.

If states have wildly varying timelines, consideration could be given to asking OSEP to define a uniform timeline for assessment and IFSP implementation.

Procurement timelines do not need to be specified in state law, but the lead agencies need to have the ability to procure assistive technology within the specified IFSP implementation timeline. It may be necessary for instance, to provide exceptions to the procurement process when infants and toddlers are involved, or to raise the amount of money lead agencies can spend without going through an external approval process. What should not be done under any circumstances, however, is to lengthen the IFSP implementation timeline or make exceptions to it because of problems with speedy procurement of assistive technology.

to loan equipment or provide used equipment for trial purposes. This is truly a critical issue; effort should be directed by states to develop equipment lending programs, perhaps in conjunction with agencies such as Easter Seals and with vendors. For instance, in the state of Maryland there is no central equipment loan program that can fully address the need of children (and adults) to borrow equipment. The issue is complicated by varying approaches to the purchase and use of assistive technology by school systems; some schools purchase devices that remain in the school when the child leaves, and other schools allow the device to

*Please see ATFSCP on page 8*

# ATEN

## Assistive Technology Education Network

*<<http://www.aten.ocps.k12.fl.us>>*

The Assistive Technology Educational Network (ATEN) Coordinating Unit provides information, awareness, and training for students, family members, teachers, and other professionals. ATEN employs a highly specialized staff trained in Assistive Technology, consisting of educators, occupational therapists, speech-language pathologists, a biomedical engineer, and support staff. Services for Florida students age 5 to 21 years with active I.E.P's are free of charge and include:

**Technical Assistance:** ATEN staff provide assistance to individuals requesting information or resources related to assistive technology via phone, fax, FIRNMAIL, email, and the World Wide Web. Statewide technical assistance can be provided on-site

when deemed necessary by the regional coordinator.

**Training:** ATEN offers a variety of assistive technology workshops at the Orlando coordinating unit and throughout the five regions of Florida.

**Print Resources:** The ATEN newsletter, Keyhole Communiqué, provides a forum for students, family members, and professionals to share information on a wide variety of topics related to assistive technology. A yearly calendar detailing scheduled workshops and training is available upon request.

**Local Assistive Technology Specialists (LATS):** ATEN supports a statewide network of LATS. LATS serve students, families, and professionals in need of

assistive technology services and support in their local districts. LATS conduct assessments for the assistive technology needs of students; consult with professionals and family members; develop and expand assistive technology programs and services; provide technical assistance, information, and training; and help students with assistive technology. LATS receive on-going training and support from ATEN.

**Resource Lab:** The model lab in Orlando houses a comprehensive array of assistive technology equipment for demonstration purposes. On display are voice and print output devices, mobility equipment, adaptations for computers, low-technology training

materials, hearing and vision equipment, environmental controls, and equipment for young children with disabilities. The lab is open to all Florida residents for scheduled appointments and is available for in-depth training. Additional lab hours for specific assistive technology topics have been scheduled.

The lab houses a resource library containing books, magazines, conference proceedings, catalogs, videos, and multi-media resources pertaining to assistive technology. These materials are available for review and checkout for a two-week period to qualified professionals in the state of Florida.

Four additional ATEN regional resource labs, located in Tallahassee, St. Augustine, Tampa, and Ft. Lauderdale, offer a sampling of assistive technology and provide training and support to their respective regions.

Loan Library: Assistive technology equipment is available for short term loan to designated school district employees for student assessment and trial use. Equipment borrowed from the ATEN library is intended for use by the student in all settings (school, home, and community) for the duration of the loan. Equipment is packaged into kits including all necessary accessories and instructions.

Assistive Technology Educational Network of Florida, 434 N. Tampa Avenue, Orlando, Florida 32805-1220. Phone: (800) 328-3678 • (407) 317-3504 • fax: (407) 317-3518. ATEN Resource Lab/Loan Library: (800) 558-6580 • (407) 317-3546 • (407) 317-3508 TDD. §

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receive the services in the student's IEP that will enable the student to meet the goals set out in the IEP.

In addition, the interim alternative placement should include services and modifications designed to address the behavior . . . so that it does not recur.

*Question: What happens if a child is suspended for 10 days?*

Answer: Under the current law, a suspension of 10 days is not considered a change in placement. The law states that a student may be suspended or removed to an interim alternative educational or other setting to the same extent that such an alternative would be applied to a child without a disability.

*Question: What does "substantial evidence" mean?*

Answer: The term substantial

evidence means more than a preponderance of evidence. This can be interpreted to mean that it is more likely than not that the maintenance of the placement will result in injury to "self or others."

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*ATFSCP continued from page 5*

*Are there any barriers to procuring technology?*

Barriers occur well before the actual procurement process and include:

1) Barriers relating to lack of knowledge:

- lack of knowledge of service providers about assistive technology and its purposes/functions;
- lack of knowledge of parents about assistive technology and its purposes/functions;
- reluctance of parents to accept or utilize technology because the assistive technology is perceived as a replacement for skills the parents hoped their child would develop—in other words, accepting assistive technology may mean accepting the extent of the disabilities the child may have at a time when the parents are not yet ready to do so;
- concern on the part of parents about being perceived as seeming to demand too much from the lead agency or feeling that whatever is offered on the IFSP is fine because they do not understand the rights they and their infant or toddler have;

These barriers can be addressed by better training of staff providing services to infants and toddlers, and by training geared specifically to the parents of infants and toddlers. However, the paradox of offering more information and training to parents is that it may be offered at a time when the parents are overwhelmed by the diagnostic process and realization that the child has disabilities and by the issues affecting new parents in general (lack

of sleep, altered schedules, need to find childcare, etc.).

It is necessary to make information about assistive technology easily understandable and digestible for parents and to focus when possible on assistive technology that can be easily incorporated into the child's life. Information and training about assistive technology should be available at levels ranging from basic to sophisticated, based on what the parents want.

2) Barriers regarding assessment:

- lack of/inadequate number of qualified assessors in general, and with respect to infants and toddlers specifically;
- no guidelines for what constitutes a competent assistive technology assessment

These barriers can be addressed by state certification requirements for assistive technology specialists and by state requirements for what elements need to be addressed in an assessment. Depending on how certification requirements for other personnel (e.g., teachers, occupational therapists, physical therapists) are handled, it may make sense to have national standards. RESNA has developed and recently administered for the first time, a certification examination for assistive technology specialists. Whether this exam is appropriate or not, some guidelines or standards should be put in place, if not at the national level, then definitely at the state level.

3) Barriers regarding provision of assistive technology cost;

- lack of agreement among agencies about which agency is responsible;
- inefficient, lengthy procurement processes;
- lack of method of tracking purchase orders to ensure timely delivery of equipment;
- delay attributable to the company that makes the device

While the last barrier is not one we have any control over (e.g. public release of the most recent version of the Dynavox was delayed for months while the company tried to address “bugs”), the other barriers can be addressed through policies and regulations.

States should, through regulation and through memoranda of understanding, clearly define the responsibilities of each agency involved in the IFSP process, including who is responsible for purchasing and providing assistive technology. When possible, Medicaid reimbursement should be sought.

Procurement processes and tracking of orders can be addressed through local school system and other agency policies and procedures.

*What potential issues or conflicts are involved in using various funding streams, such as Medicaid and private insurance?*

Use of private insurance benefits for third party reimbursement is tricky because of insurance caps and limitations regarding the frequency with which replacement devices may be procured. While parents may choose to allow the lead agency to seek third party reimbursement, they need to be well-informed about the

impact such an action would have, and cannot be allowed to accrue any cost for doing so. While it may, from the state's public policy standpoint, make sense to encourage families to utilize private insurance benefits to defray the cost of assistive technology devices and services provided as part of an educational program, it does not make sense from an advocacy standpoint to do so. The problems inherent in using private insurance benefits do not arise with Medicaid, and there seems to be no reason not to pursue aggressively Medicaid reimbursement for assistive technology. However, lengthy Medicaid determination processes should not delay the provision of assistive technology to infants and toddlers.

Parents certainly can choose to obtain assistive technology privately with insurance coverage in order to obtain technology devices that will belong to the child. The lead agency should, consistent with OSEP Part B policy rulings, assume responsibility for maintenance and repair.

A possible problem with trying to obtain assistive technology coverage through private insurance is that the company may not cover the assistive technology. The parent would then face the issue of challenging the insurance company's denial of coverage. In no case should a parent's decision to obtain assistive technology privately affect the agencies' responsibility to provide assistive technology to infants and toddlers who need it as part of their IFSPs. The agencies should be prepared to provide the device or a loaner to the child in a timely manner.

It is important to sort through the potential conflict between making the "medically necessary" argument that

insurance companies may require, and the "educationally necessary" standard of the IDEA. The fact that a device is determined to be medically necessary should not result in a refusal on the part of the school system to provide the device to the child if he or she goes on to receive Part B services?

*What provisions are made for loan of and/or use of used equipment for trial before purchase?*

States and localities vary in their ability to loan equipment or provide used equipment for trial purposes. This is truly a critical issue; effort should be directed by states to develop equipment lending programs, perhaps in conjunction with agencies such as Easter Seals and with vendors. For instance, in the state of Maryland there is no central equipment loan program that can fully address the need of children (and adults) to borrow equipment. The issue is complicated by varying approaches to the purchase and use of assistive technology by school systems; some schools purchase devices that remain in the school when the child leaves, and other schools allow the device to move with the child. Uniform policies within school systems would be helpful to address this issue, although a state policy is probably necessary to address what happens to assistive technology when children move from one school system to another. Also, for infants and toddlers, policies need to be in place if the equipment is purchased by agencies other than the school system.

*Who owns the equipment?*

If the parents purchase the

equipment or obtains the equipment with insurance or Medicaid coverage, the family owns the equipment. If the school system purchases the equipment, the school system owns it. As discussed above, depending on whether the equipment is funded from a central budget or a particular school budget, issues arise regarding the portability of the equipment when the child leaves the school he or she attended when the equipment was purchased. Again, policies need to be developed at the state level to address provision and ownership of assistive technology for infants and toddlers. If agencies other than the school system purchase assistive technology for infants and toddlers, policies need to be in place regarding ownership of equipment.

*What kinds of provisions are made for transfer of equipment when transferring or transitioning to other services?*

Again, the issue of transfer of equipment between school programs should be addressed in local school system and probably state policies. Local and state policies also need to be in place to govern the provision of students transitioning from Part C to Part B services. The assistive technology that these children have been using should automatically transfer with them when they begin Part B services, if such assistive technology is necessary for them to receive a free appropriate public education. Therefore, the assistive technology should be included on the IEP when it is developed and should be able to be implemented immediately. Policies should be in place to guarantee that there is no break in the child's use of the equipment or the provision of the

COMPUTER cont. from page 3

## **Spreadsheets**

Although spreadsheets are most often used as a tool for adults, with a parent's guidance they can provide many wonderful opportunities for children to develop analytical and organizational skills creatively. Children can use spreadsheets to make their own tables, charts and graphs.

## **Database Programs**

Databases can be great tools to help children sort and organize information that is interesting to them such as friends' telephone numbers, sports statistics, baseball cards or other collections. Most young children will require a parent's presence and guidance to use a database.

Encouraging kids to learn about databases opens their minds to exploring relationships and the implications of sorting by attributes. Ask them about the relationships they see and discover.

## **Reference Tools**

*If you have a CD-ROM drive, consider using encyclopedias, atlases or other online resources with your child. The color, sound and motion photography offered by these programs can captivate children's attention, helping them to build vocabulary, create associations and increase knowledge. These features will also empower your child to explore many of his or her questions and interests. Moreover, your child will begin to learn the value of drawing upon outside resources for*

information.

## **Simulation Software**

Computer simulations are very effective in helping children understand the intricate interrelationships of elaborate systems. Conceptual understanding of complex relationships can lead to many creative insights.

These programs encourage kids to grapple with complex problems that are too difficult, dangerous or expensive to deal with in the real world. Programs may introduce kids to the perils of war or contagious disease, or let them tackle the intricacies of urbanization, space exploration or immigration. Kids are required to gather information, compare observations, test hypotheses, make predictions and document their research findings. In the end, they not only learn more about the topic investigated, they also learn how to analyze and classify data, note similarities and differences, develop a reasonable explanation for events and think creatively about how to resolve a particular problem.

## **Online Communication and Resources**

Online services allow you to connect with other people-literally! With a modem, a computer cable and a phone line, you can make your computer a conduit for sharing information and ideas with others at home or in business. Once connected, your family can, in most cases for a flat monthly or per-hour fee, take part in online discussions,

send and receive mail, share articles, and review news and reference materials. While many of these resources are more appropriate for older children, there are some fun resources that you can enjoy with very young children, too.

Parental guidance is strongly suggested. Parents should monitor their children's use of online services for several reasons. Many of these services are not free, and children have been known to run tip quite a bill! In addition, there are areas which are not suitable for children (P-rated chat rooms, libraries with graphic files, etc.). Since these forums are open to everyone, you will want to control the people with whom your child communicates (in chat rooms or through e-mail).

Extensive discussion about online services is beyond the scope of this guide. We mention them here because they can offer your child access to exciting information and interesting new friends. There are many books about popular online services available in book stores and software stores.

*Editor's Note - Edmark is a publisher of educational software and print materials, with more than 20 years of experience applying proven educational concepts to the development of early learning products for the classroom and home. Designed to take advantage of the graphics, sound and speed of Macintosh and IBM compatible personal computers, their award-winning programs will engage your child in hours of fun-filled learning. §*

*ATFSCP continued from page 9*

service. This is particularly important if the assistive technology has been provided by an agency other than the school system and the agency expects to take the device(s) from the child when he or she turns three. Possible approaches would include: 1) having the school system purchase the equipment from the agency; or 2) explicitly planning for the IEP-driven assistive technology devices and services well enough in advance so that if the school system has to provide the equipment currently provided by another agency, it can obtain the equipment and provide it to the child without a break during the transition from Part C to Part B.

*Is assistive technology part of the state recommended IFSP*

*form, if one exists?*

Assistive technology should be listed on each state's recommended IFSP form if such a form exists. If not, then each local jurisdiction's IFSP form should include assistive technology in its list of services. This is an essential element of ensuring that a child's need for assistive technology is considered.

The opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the position or the policy of the U.S. Department of Education, and no official endorsement by the U.S. Department of Education of the opinions expressed herein should be inferred.

Next Month: Parts 4 and 5 of Part C of the IDEA. §

## Conferences & Events

**Date: November 20 - 24**

ASHA Convention. Boston, MA.

Contact: 301-897-5700

**Date: December 10-13**

TASH Annual Conference. Boston, MA.

Contact: 410-828-8274; 410-828-1306 (TDD); Fax: 410-828-6706; dmarsh@tash.org

**Date: March 5-8, 1998**

5th Annual Training Seminar and Conference Society for Cognitive Rehabilitation, Wilkes Barre, PA.

Contact: 717-826-3872; Fax: 717-826-3898; E-mail:

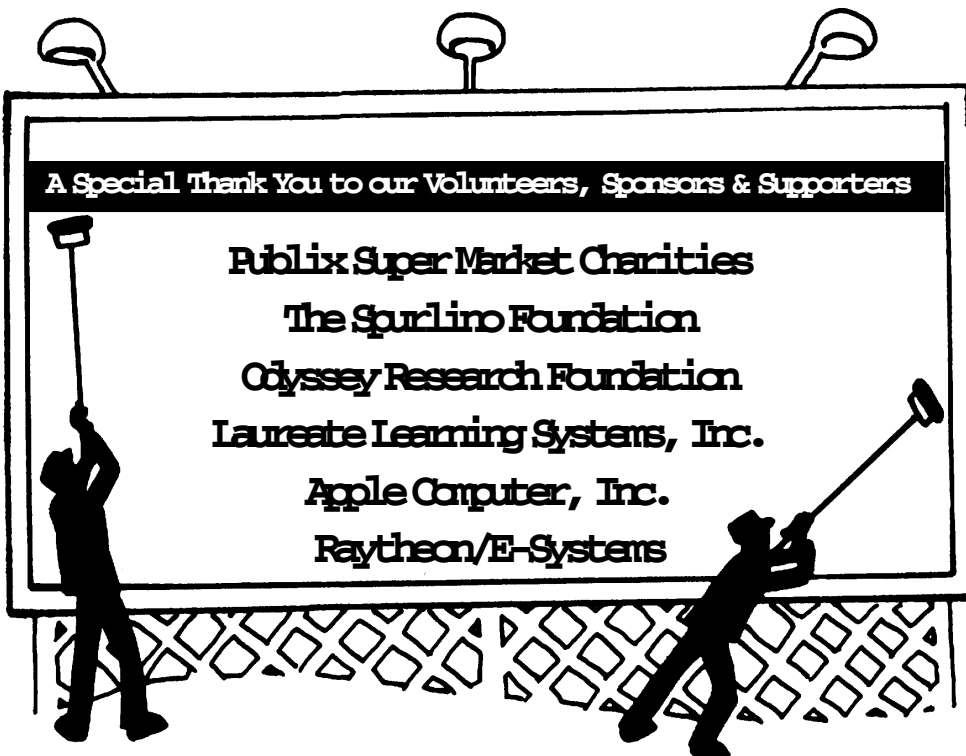
KrisCog@aol.com

**Date: March 11-14, 1998**

Learning Disabilities Association of America, 35th Annual International Conference, Washington, DC. Contact: 412-341-1515

**Date: March 17 -21, 1998**

Technology and Persons with Disabilities. California State University, Los Angeles, CA. Contact: 818-677-2578



**Free Software Updates**



Dana Point, CA – RJ Cooper has announced free updates to his popular software, CrossScanner, single switch mouse emulator and a new release, Biggy for Windows.

CrossScanner, along with several new features and fixes, has been separated from OnScreen, the on-the-screen keyboard with WordCompletion and Auto-Arranging of windows. Current owners of the old CrossScanner will receive both the new CrossScanner and OnScreen. If you have the old CrossScanner for Windows or Mac, simply send it back for the free updates.

CrossScanner and OnScreen for Mac or Windows are \$99 each for new purchasers.

Biggy for Windows, a new product, follows the lead that Biggy for Mac gave: BIG cursors and several cursor enhancement utilities. The Windows version also has KeyMouse for using the keypad to control cursor and clicking functions, and ButtonMouse, a new 2 switch method for controlling the mouse. Biggy for Mac or Windows is \$99.

Free demos are available at the web site <[www.ricooper.com](http://www.ricooper.com)>. A free single switch arcade game is there also. Contact RJ Cooper & Assoc., 1-800-RjCooper (714-661-6904), <[tj@rjcooper.com](mailto:tj@rjcooper.com)> for more info.

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**NEW! 6 LEVEL COMMUNICATOR**

Enabling Devices, a division of Toys for Special Children, Inc., is proud to introduce a new 6 Level Communicator. This innovative communicator is a superb tool for developing language skills and can also be used to provide effective communication for people whose verbal competence is lacking.

It features six levels of recording capacity, with eight 5-second messages per level, for a total of 48 messages. This saves valuable time in a classroom by eliminating the need to constantly re-record new messages. You can have each level

contain a theme, i.e., food, clothing, transportation, etc., or a level can be used to combine frequently used words to form phrases.

The user simply slides a picture card (yours or ours) behind the overlay, and touches one of the 2" square pictures to activate the message. When a new set of messages is desired, simply set the switch on the back of the unit and slide in the corresponding card. Messages can be stored indefinitely, or modified and updated as the user's needs change and grow. In addition, state-of-the-art electronic recording chips provide amazingly clear *sound* quality.

In addition to communication devices, the company manufacturers capability switches, environmental controls, adapted toys and more Product literature and free catalogs available. 800-832-8697

Hastings-on-Hudson, NY – Enabling Devices, Toys for Special Children, Inc. 385 Warburton Avenue, Hastings-on-Hudson, NY 10706 Phone: 800-832-8697. E-Mail: [customer\\_support@enablingdevices.com](mailto:customer_support@enablingdevices.com) Web: <http://www.enablingdevices.com>

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