

**Protection & Advocacy
Assistive Technology Program**

*The difference between being
'dependent' and 'INDEPENDENT'*

The Protection and Advocacy Assistive Technology (PAAT) Program provides services to individuals who have assistive technology needs. This is done through a variety of strategies. SDAS also collaborates with the DakotaLink Project and the state Division of Rehabilitation Services to provide assistive technology to eligible individuals.

INFORMATION

PAAT provides information, including referral, research, and analysis to overcome legal, administrative, and other barriers to obtaining assistive technology.

**ADVOCACY / LEGAL
REPRESENTATION**

PAAT provides advocacy assistance and legal representation to pursue issues unique to assistive technology.

EDUCATION & TRAINING

PAAT provides education and training to empower individuals with the skills to address and overcome barriers in obtaining assistive technology.

OUTREACH

PAAT efforts include outreach to traditionally underrepresented and rural populations of all ages in South Dakota, including the Native American Tribal Reservations.

**Who is eligible for
PAAT services?**

*Persons with a disability, including persons residing in facilities who have assistive technology needs.

*Persons and entities who have questions regarding assistive technology or who would like training in issues relating to assistive technology.

For more information:

South Dakota Advocacy Services
221 S. Central Avenue, Ste. 38
Pierre, SD 57501

Ph: 605-224-8294

Toll Free: **1-800-658-4782**

Fax: 605-224-5125

Website: www.sdadvocacy.com

Email: sdas@sdadvocacy.com

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Assisting South Dakotans with Disabilities

**PAAT
Protection & Advocacy
Assistive Technology**

**Assistive Technology
and
Traumatic Brain Injuries**

This brochure is provided as general information about assistive technology for persons with traumatic brain injuries. This information should not be considered legal advice applicable to specific situations.

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What Is Assistive Technology?

Assistive Technology (“AT”) means actual devices *and* specific services to assist an individual in being able to use an AT device.

- An AT **device** is any item, piece of equipment, or product system, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities.
- An AT **service** directly assists an individual with a disability in the selection, acquisition, or use of an assistive technology device.
- Examples of AT devices and further description of AT services are contained in the center column.

How Can Assistive Technology Help Someone With A Traumatic Brain Injury?

A Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) can impair one or more areas of functioning, such as intellectual, social, behavioral, physical, and communication. A person with a TBI may experience confusion, mood changes, and also have difficulties with memory, planning, attention, and task completion. AT can help a person plan, organize, and concentrate in order to complete tasks. AT can aid mobility and also provide ways to communicate.

AT comes in many different forms and can assist in all areas of impairment. Examples include:

DEVICES

- Smartphone
- iPad / tablet
- Motorized wheelchair
- Stair lift
- Pencil grip
- Slant board
- Bathroom grab bars
- Picture schedule
- Large font computer keyboards
- Medication alarm reminders
- Speech recognition software
- Screen reading software
- Digital magnifier
- Applications (Apps) for Apple, Android, Windows devices

SERVICES

- Receiving an assessment to determine which AT device is needed.
- Acquiring a needed AT device.
- Customizing, repairing, and replacing assistive technology devices.
- Receiving training on how to use an AT device, as well as provision of training for family, professionals, employers, or others in use of the AT device.
- Coordinating use of an AT device with other services, such as therapy.

Assistive Technology Benefits

Independence

Using AT can also assist someone to live at home and be a part of their community, rather than live in a facility away from their family and friends.

Employment

Individuals with a TBI may experience challenges with finding and keeping employment. Using AT can sometimes make the difference of whether a person can get to a job and/or complete the essential functions of the job.

Anti-Stigma

In the past, people who used AT stood out as being different. But now, it is very common for people to walk around with a device (smartphone, iPad), so people with disabilities fit in with their peers. Using AT is now easier than ever. Most devices and applications are already programmed and can be easily set up to fit individual needs.

Assistance with Cost

AT costs can range from just a few dollars to thousands of dollars, depending on the device or service needed. There are programs available that may help defray the costs of the AT a person needs.