



Kentucky Assistive Technology Service (KATS) Network 1-800-327-5287

Fact Sheet 6 - Assistive Technology and Early Childhood

Note: See Fact Sheet # 2 for information on adaptive toys.

Assistive technology, such as positioning equipment, mobility devices, bath equipment, therapy equipment, augmentative communication, and van lifts can play an extremely important part in the development of a young child with a disability. The major sources of funding are outlined in this fact sheet as follows:

Funding

First Steps

First Steps is a statewide early intervention system which provides services to children with developmental delays from birth to age three. Services include: Evaluation/Assessment; Service Coordination; Transportation; Assistive Technology and other services that help diminish the effects of developmental delays. Services are based on the child's needs and will be identified by the child's Individualized Family Services Plan. There is no cost to eligible children and their families. For more information, contact Kentucky Early Intervention Service at (800) 442-0087.

Medicaid

Medicaid is a federal assistance program designed to cover medical costs for people with low incomes and is administered in Kentucky as the Kentucky Medical Assistance Program. Generally, income and resource requirements determine eligibility for the program, although anyone who receives SSI benefits automatically qualifies for Medicaid. To receive assistive technology from Medicaid through the Durable Medical Equipment program, a person must have a medical need for the technology and it must be recommended by a physician. More services can be acquired under the Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment (EPSDT) Program for children under the age of twenty-one. **(See Fact Sheet # 8)** Augmentative Communication Devices can be provided for under EPSDT if there is demonstrable medical need for the device. Individuals can inquire about Medicaid eligibility at their local Department of Community Based Services Permanency and Protection Unit.

Local School Districts

In Kentucky, any child three years of age or older who has a disability is eligible for services from their local school district. An Individualized Education Plan (IEP) must be developed for each child in this group. The IEP is the key for receiving assistive technology through the local school district. **(See Fact Sheet #4 for more detailed information.)** If the assistive technology is included as part of the IEP, the local school district is required to see that it is provided. They may look for other sources of funding, but must pay for it if no other funding is available. Parents should contact the Special Education Coordinator of their local school district for more information.

Commission for Children with Special Health Needs

The Commission provides a number of services to children under the age of 22 who have conditions that are physical in nature and will usually respond to treatment. Services include diagnostic evaluation, clinical follow-up, hospitalization, surgery, medical equipment, supplies, and therapy services. All services must be prescribed by a staff physician at one of the Commission's clinics located around the state. Assistive technology can be purchased by the Commission if it is prescribed. There are financial eligibility guidelines for this program, but they are decided on a case-by-case basis using estimates of the cost of services and the family's ability to pay. For more information, call the Kentucky Commission for Children with Special Health Needs at (800) 232-1160.

Disabled Children's Program

The Commission also administers the Disabled Children's Program. Under this program, any child with a disability under six years of age who is not yet in school and who has been determined to be eligible for SSI benefits is automatically eligible for the Disabled Children's Program. Six Hundred dollars of services per year are provided for each child. Services can include assistive technology and services, developmental day care, parent training, physical therapy, physician services and respite care.

Charitable Organizations:

There are a variety of charitable organizations that can provide assistance to children from birth to six years of age. Many of these organizations have a very specific eligibility criterion which is often connected to the child's disability. This list below is not meant to be all-inclusive.

Disabled Children's Relief Fund

The Disabled Children's Relief Fund serves all disabilities by providing medical equipment, prostheses assistive technology devices and services. For more information, contact (516) 377-1605.

The Dream Factory

The Dream Factory provides services to children with critical illnesses by providing funding for a child's request. For more information, contact (800) 456-7556.

High Technology Fund of the Lions Club Blind/Visual Impairments

They provide assistive technology to children with visual impairments for educational purposes. For more information, contact (502) 245-2463.

Make-a-Wish Foundation

Make-a-Wish provides services for children with life-threatening illnesses by providing funding for a child's request. For more information, contact (800) 722-WISH.

Muscular Dystrophy Association

Provides services for neuromuscular Diseases such as assistive technology, medical equipment. For more information, contact (502) 456-1440.

Shrine Temple

The Shrine Temple provides services for children with specific physical disabilities such as mobility devices. For more information, contact (502) 585-5412.

Sunshine Foundation

The Sunshine Foundation provides services for children with critical illnesses by providing funding for a child's request. For more information, contact (215) 396-4770.

Woodmen of the World

Woodmen of the World provide mobility devices for individuals with mobility impairments. For more information, contact (270) 753-4382.

Another possibility is local service clubs. Many of these groups will take a special interest in individual cases and raise the money required for the child. Some such groups include the Civitan Clubs, the Kiwanis Clubs, the Lions and Lioness Clubs. The KATS Network can help you find an active local club near you.

Sources of Assistance

The following agencies and organizations can provide a variety of services (not necessarily related to assistive technology) to families with infants, toddlers and young children with disabilities:

- **Autism Society of Kentuckiana** - www.ask-lou.org, (502) 222-4706
- **Children's Services Coordinator** - Dept. for MH/MR, 100 Fair Oaks Lane 4W-C, Frankfort, KY 40621, (502) 564-7702
- **Division of Adult & Child Health** - 275 East Main Street, Frankfort, KY 40621, (502) 564-3527
- **Exceptional Children** - Department of Education, 500 Mero Street, 8th Floor CPT, Frankfort, KY 40601, (502) 564-4970
- **KY Special Parent Involvement Network (KY SPIN)** - 10301-B Deering Rd, Louisville, KY 40203, (502) 937-6894
- **National Lekotek Center** - 3204 W. Armitage Avenue, Chicago, IL 60647, (773) 276-5164
- **People Understanding the Needs of Children with Handicaps (PUNCH)** - 5334 Stevin Dr, Paducah KY 42001, (270) 554-5006
- **Services for Deaf/Blind Children** - 229 Taylor Education Building, University of Kentucky, Lexington, KY 40506, (859) 257-7909
- **Spina Bifida Association of KY** - Kosair Charities Centre, 982 Eastern Parkway, Box 18, Louisville, KY 40217, (502) 637-7363



- **Visually Impaired Preschool Services** - 1906 Goldsmith Lane, Louisville, KY 40218, (502) 636-3207

