ALTERNATIVE AND AUGMENTATIVE COMMUNICATION (AAC)

Definition:
An umbrella-like term for a group of strategies that assists the development or use of communication skills.

- **Alternative**: another way
- **Augmentative**: add to; assist

FACTS:
- Used by individuals with all types of communication issues
- Used by individuals of all ages
- May be high tech, low tech or no tech
- The "system" belongs to the person and should always be available
- Introduced with high priority communication needs

TYPES:
- **Photographs**
- **Symbol System**
  - Gestures
  - Sign Language
  - Concrete symbols (Picture Communication Symbols, etc.)
  - Abstract symbols
- **Visual schedules, cue cards, emotion cards**, etc.
- **Devices**
ISSUES TO CONSIDER:

- Early intervention

- Functional implementation

- Respect use

- Respond to message

- Technological support

- Training
ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY DEVICE

Definition:
Any item, piece of equipment or product system, whether acquired commercially off the shelf, modified or customized, that is used to increase, maintain or improve functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities. (Tech Act)

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY SERVICE

Definition:
Any service that directly assists an individual with a disability in the selection, acquisition or use of an assistive technology device.

Assistive Technology includes:
- positioning and mobility
- augmentative communication
- computer access
- adaptive toys and games
- adaptive environments
- funding

which impacts
- across environments
- across age
- across disability
- across severity of disability

and produces outcomes of
- independence
- productivity
- self-worth
- inclusion
- integration
EXAMPLES OF LOW TECHNOLOGY

- Cane
- Pen and Pencil Grips
- Magnifying Glass
- Shampoo Basin
EXAMPLES OF HIGH TECHNOLOGY

- TDD
- Lift
- Voice Input Computer
- Voice Output Augmentative/Alternative Communication Device
EXAMPLES OF VISION TECHNOLOGY

Enlarged Print

Check Writing Guide

EXAMPLES OF HEARING TECHNOLOGY

Closed Caption

Wireless Auditory Trainer/ FM System
EXAMPLES OF COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

- Communication Board
- Liberator

EXAMPLES OF MOBILITY TECHNOLOGY

- Walker
- Wheelchair
EXAMPLES OF COGNITION TECHNOLOGY

Adapted Toys

Computer
EXAMPLES OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROLS

Modified Light Switch, Key Ring and Lock

Clothing with Velcro

Door Opening Device
For Americans without disabilities technology makes things easier.

For Americans with disabilities technology makes things possible.

National Council on Disabilities, March 1993 Report to Congress on Assistive Technology
Additional Information Sources

- Increasing Capabilities Access Network (ICAN)
  2202 Brookwood, #117
  Little Rock, AR 72202
  501-666-8868 or 800-828-2799 (Voice/TTD)
  www.arkansas-ican.org

- ABLEDATA
  8630 Fenton Street, Suite 930
  Silver Spring, MD 20910
  www.abledata.com

Included Resource Material

- About ICAN - Increasing Capabilities Access Network, Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (2 Pages)

- What is ABLEDATA? National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, U.S. Department of Education (3 Pages)