TECHNOLOGY TODAY
ODP Technology Taskforce Newsletter

Welcome

Welcome to the first edition of Technology Today! Since 2019, the Office of Developmental Programs (ODP) has brought together stakeholders from across Pennsylvania to work on advancing technology use for individuals with intellectual disabilities and autism through the development of the Technology Taskforce.

This group of dedicated professionals has been working on a range of topics, looking for ways to support individuals, families, and providers to learn about, access, and use different forms of technology to improve the lives of people across the state.

Current workgroups within the task force focus on: Strategic Partnerships and Funding, Policies & Procedures/Service Definitions, Expanding Technology in Supported Living, and Marketing.

The aim of this quarterly newsletter is to share the work being done by the taskforce, as well as resources, events, and success stories. We hope you enjoy the inaugural edition of this newsletter and join us for future editions!

Getting Started with Technology

Most of us use many types technology throughout our days that make our lives easier and safer: cell phones, GPS, computers, doorbell cameras, etc. But when it comes to the use of technology to support individuals with intellectual disabilities and autism to be more independent, we don't always know where to start. The task can seem overwhelming, expensive, and confusing.

One resource that can guide individuals, families, and teams is the Smart Homes Made Simple website. This site was developed by Pennsylvania Assistive Technology Foundation (PATF) and was made possible by a grant from the PA Developmental Disabilities Council. Smart Homes Made Simple Guide and Assessment Tool
(also available in Spanish)

🟡 Success Stories 🟡

Meet Pete who started exploring ways that technology could help him connect with his community when the COVID-10 pandemic hit. From there he's continued exploring ways that technology can help him be safe and independent in his daily life! Read Pete's full story on MyODP.
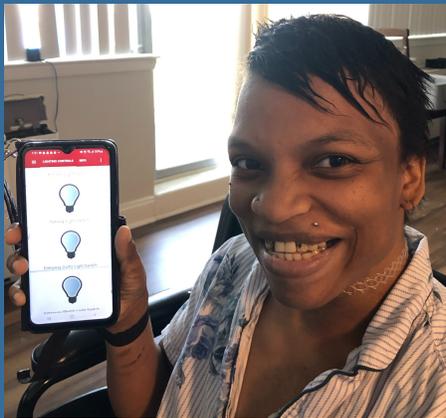
Meet Patricia who loves different types of technology, from low tech to high tech. While Patricia was already using technology in many different areas of her daily life, engaging with an enabling tech specialist helped her expand her technology usage even further! Read Patricia's full story on MyODP.

Events

2022 Disability Summit

Hosted by State Representative Joe Hohenstein, The Arc of Philadelphia, KenCrest, and Temple University's Institute on Disabilities; this **Free** conference highlights enabling and assistive technologies, and the many adaptations and smart devices — creating greater accessibility for all.

For more information and to register, visit: **https://www.kencrest.org/disability-summit/**

Resources

BridgingApps: Website based community that shares information on how apps and mobile devices can help provide independence and support to those with disabilities.
For more info, visit: **https://bridgingapps.org/**

Affordable Connectivity Program: This program through the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) is a benefit program that helps households afford broadband internet.
For more info, visit: **https://www.fcc.gov/acp**

Everyday Lives Conference

Presentations on June 1, 2022 of the Everyday Lives Conference focused on Supportive Technology, covering a range of topics from accessibility, to remote supports, and increasing independence. If you weren't able to attend the conference live, click on the images below to view the presentations. All presentations from the conference are available on the Whova Website.

Remote Supports: Opportunities for Safety and Independence

SafeInHome presents on the use of remote supports in the person-centered process. Don Shirley discusses how agencies can provide the least restrictive solutions while addressing safety, independence and privacy.

Increasing Independence Through Technology

Nathan Gerhard from Keystone Human Services shares how they have partnered with tech vendors to increase independence of people living in community homes, lifesharing, and supported living.
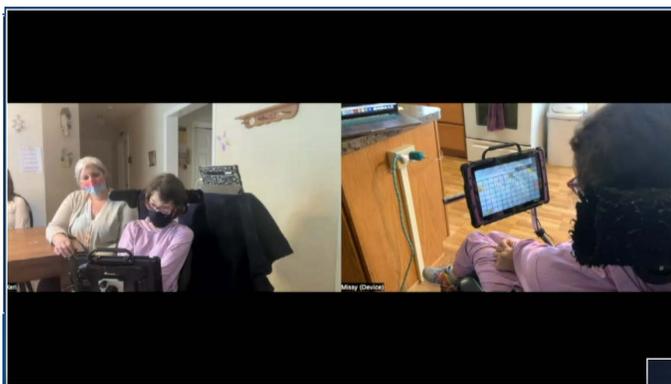
An Everyday Life with Assistive Technology

Self-advocate Keri McKenna presents her journey with assistive technology and communication. She shares her experiences in obtaining and using technology to communicate.
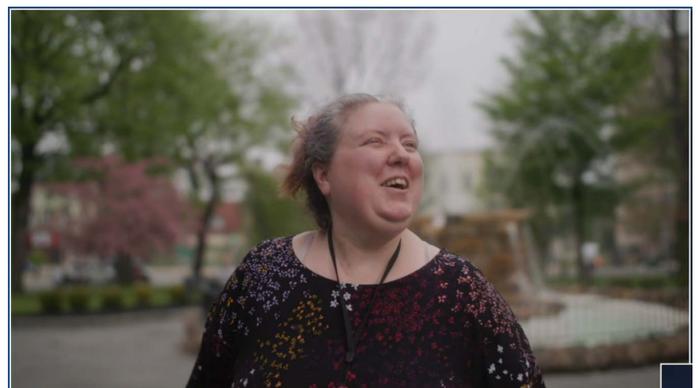
An Everyday Life with Remote Supports

Panel discussion that focuses on the journey to support Emily and Stacey as they integrate remote supports into their everyday lives. Learn from the support team, tech provider, supports coordinators, administrators and direct support professionals.

Spotlight On: Strategic Partnerships & Funding

The Strategic Partnerships and Funding Workgroup has been meeting throughout the year to determine goals and objectives for the 2022 year and working closely with ODP Leadership, Deloitte Consulting, and workgroup colleagues. We are currently proceeding along two parallel paths to develop a resource guide to facilitate funding for assistive technologies and other available tech, and to pilot strategic partnerships by establishing relationships with one or two other organizations focused on delivering technology to the Intellectual Disability/Autism (ID/A) community.

We would like to share the Pennsylvania Assistive Technology Foundation Guide to Funding Assistive Technology. We are currently exploring a collaboration with the University of Pittsburgh's Department of Rehabilitation Science and Technology through their Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center to explore everyday tech as assistive technology, and to promote the expansion of tech adoption across the ID/A community.

We look forward to continuing our work and welcome any information, input, ideas, questions, or new members to join our team!

TECH CORNER: MEDICATION DISPENSERS

From low-tech pill organizers with compartments for dosages over a week, to monitored medication dispensers controlled by apps or web portals, there are a range of options to help people increase their independence. For some, a medication dispenser can significantly reduce their reliance on other people.

Visit MyODP to learn more about the different types of medication dispensers.

Want to get involved?

For more information about the ODP Technology Taskforce or to get involved in one of the workgroups, please contact: Ho-Jung Mardorff at hmardorff@deloitte.com