

TECHNOLOGY TODAY

ODP Technology Taskforce Newsletter



Welcome to 2024! Let's start this year off the right way with ODP Tech Taskforce's newsletter: *Technology Today*. The new year is the opportunity for new technology, more accessibility, and better support for individuals with disabilities, family members, and providers. We're dedicated to sharing resources, events, and important updates in the supportive technology world.



Call for Personal Stories



Our Taskforce is always looking for more individuals with disabilities to provide personal stories. We want to know how supportive technology has made a positive impact on people's lives. These personal stories can be in the form of videos, blogs, or written essays. They will be highlighted in our future newsletters.

If you're interested or want to know more, reach out to: ra-PWODP_Outreach@pa.gov

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New Year, New Tech

Technology advances happen so quickly that it can be hard to keep up with the newest trends and devices. To celebrate the beginning of a new year, we're highlighting some of the newer devices and technologies available to help people live their best lives.

Please note that some of these technologies may still be in early stages of development. The specific devices listed below are examples and not a complete list of the companies that may offer similar products. As with any technology, it's important to research and find options that are best for each individual.

[Click Here to Read More.](#)

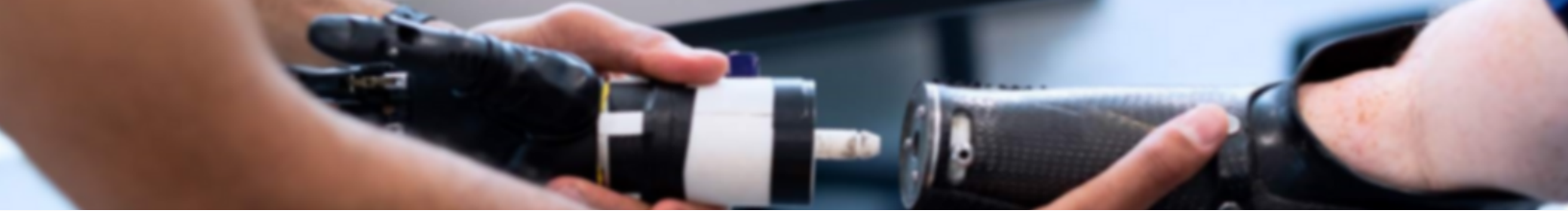
Mobile Application Resources



Daylio: This app serves as a self-care bullet journal with features for goal setting and mood tracking. With a simple two-step process, users can swiftly create daily diary entries by choosing their mood and the activities they wish to monitor. Functioning like a personalized accountability tool, it resembles a bullet journal and enables users to record significant events and easily access information at a glance.

[Click here](#) to learn more.

Evolve 21: This wellness app offers a transformative 21-day program centered on cardio, yoga, or meditation. It provides adaptive exercises designed by experts to accommodate various abilities and disabilities, enabling users to customize their daily workouts for enhanced health and well-being. adaptive exercises designed by experts to accommodate various abilities and disabilities, enabling users to customize their daily workouts for enhanced health and well-being. [Click here](#) to learn more.



Accessibility is Key!



- [Wonders Within Reach:](#)
 - A guide to help you plan a wheelchair accessible Pennsylvania road trip.
- [Bureau of Internet Accessibility:](#)
 - Provides testing to ensure your website meets accessibility standards.

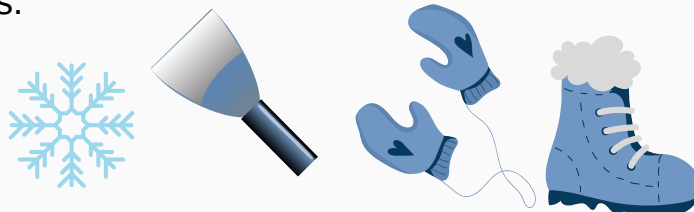
TECH CORNER: Tips for Winter Weather Assistive Technology

As winter weather impacts our state, there are several assistive technology options to help you stay safe.

When temperatures drop, it is important to stay warm outside and inside. When indoors, consider using a thermostat with large print, braille, audio capabilities or programming options. Also, to help keep warm, consider electric blankets and wearing multiple layers of clothing. Other tips to avoid needing to go outdoors at all are the use of delivery systems for food and other essentials and signing up for local alerts and warnings.

Going outdoors during winter weather can pose additional risks, but below are several examples of assistive technology that may help:

- Ice grips for shoes or canes.
- All-terrain tires for wheelchairs or wrapping nylon ties evenly around each wheel and tire.
- Snow shovels that have ergonomic handles or that allow for pushing instead of lifting.
- Ice melt, rock salt, kitty litter on ramps and stairs.
- Adjustable ice scrapers.
- Shoe treads
- Touchscreen gloves.



Whether indoors or out, use these assistive technology tips to help stay safe during winter weather.

[Click Here for More Information.](#)



Personal Story

Chris, who just turned 30, has a love for music. He has worked as a volunteer at local radio station Wired 96.5 and continues to stay up to date on the latest news involving his favorite artists. Since the built-in social network of college has passed, Chris works hard to maintain a sense of connection with friends, both old and new. When he heard about PATF's Money Club, Chris jumped at the chance to participate. The Money Club provided him with an opportunity to learn more about money matters and a chance to meet new people.

[Click here to read Chris' story written by the PA Assistive Technology Foundation.](#)

Upcoming and Past Events

Assistive Technology Industry Association Conference

What: Join thousands of practitioners, teachers, parents, caregivers, persons with disabilities, and more, to discover new technologies, opportunities, and creative ideas that support the power of the Assistive Technology community.

When: January 31 - February 4, 2024

Where: Orlando, FL (virtual options available)

- [In-Person/Virtual Registration](#)



Building Accessible Experiences: Accessibility Virtual Conference

- **What:** A FREE 3-day virtual conference by axe-con where you will hear best practices and updates from technology leaders around the world and learn how to build, test, monitor, and maintain digital accessibility. [Conference Agenda.](#)
- **When:** February 20 - February 22, 2024 | 9:00 AM ET
 - [Virtual Registration](#)



“Technology - Virtual Community Engagement Summits”

Hosted by *Visions for Equality & PA Family Network*

A series of informational webinars were recently held by Visions for Equality in partnership with the PA Family Network entitled: “Technology-Virtual Community Engagement Summits”

Technology has become a major part of all of our lives. For people with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities, technology can offer opportunities for independence, entertainment, choice, and control. Additionally, Remote Supports are now offered which offers more opportunities for services that can help increase independence, too.

The 6-hour summits were held by region on consecutive dates from December 4-8th, 2023 to include the Northeast, Southeast, Southcentral, Central and West regions. Please see the video clips of selected sessions as listed below.

Video 1- Assistive Technology and Remote Supports Summits

Join us for the first half of our Assistive Technology and Remote Supports Summit with three key presentations.

- Keynote: Jeremy Yale, Office of Developmental Programs (ODP).
- Smart Home Technology for Independence and How to Fund It: Wendy Harkins Davis, Pennsylvania Assistive Technology Foundation's (PATF).
- Maximizing Potential while Mitigating Risk: Diana Smaglik, PA Family Network.

[Click Here to Watch.](#)

Video 2- In Our Own Words: Real Life Stories of Assistive Technology and Remote Supports

Hear from individuals with disabilities and their families as they discuss how they've used remote supports and Assistive Technology to live more fulfilling lives of their own choosing!

[Click Here to Watch.](#)

Want to get involved?

For more information about the Taskforce, to get involved, or to submit a question please contact:
ra-PWODP_Outreach@pa.gov