

Assistive Technology Basics



Lesson Objectives

As a result of this lesson, learners will be able to:

- Describe what assistive technology is.
- List 3 examples of assistive technology devices.
- Describe the benefits of using assistive technology.
- Ask questions to see if assistive technology is right for them or the person they care for.
- Describe where assistive technology devices can be bought, rented, or received for free.
- List some ways to pay for assistive technology.
- Describe where to go for help with assistive technology.
- Engage with a variety of assistive technology tools (if the toolkit is used).

Audience

Individuals interested in learning more about making daily tasks easier for themselves and others (particularly older adults, individuals with disabilities, and caregivers).

Program Resources

The demonstration toolkit is integral to the success of this program. In Kansas, toolkits are located in several extension county, district, and area offices. Please reserve a toolkit in advance of your program and plan to pick it up and return it promptly. To find a toolkit or learn

more, contact an Adult Development and Aging Program Focus Team Leader. Other materials and resources can be found at www.aging.ksu.edu.

To Prepare for Leading the Lesson

- Gather and review all materials, then print the fact sheet and evaluation for the learners:
 - Fact Sheet (MF3651)
 - Leader's Guide (MF3652)
 - Demonstration Toolkit
 - PowerPoint Presentation
 - Participant Evaluation (also located in PEARS)
- Become familiar with the demonstration toolkit and packing list. Try the devices so that you feel comfortable showing them.
- View the PowerPoint presentation to become familiar with each item in the toolkit and its use.

Visit the online resources listed in the fact sheet.

Leading the Lesson

Sample introduction: Today we are going to learn about some practical tools for doing everyday tasks. Assistive technology is a term that refers to a broad category of devices that can be applied to all aspects of life. Today we will help you better understand what assistive technology is. Through the devices in the toolkit, we will provide ideas of tools individuals can use to accomplish

everyday tasks, such as getting dressed, bathing, preparing meals, and doing basic household chores. We will also explore places to find resources to buy, rent, or get free assistive technology devices and talk about how to pay for them. I'd also like to have a conversation about your experiences with assistive technology and resources in our community. So, let's learn together!

Activity 1: Brainstorming

What kinds of assistive technology do we already use? To get us started, we are going to get into small groups and make a list of all the everyday tools we use to go about our daily routines. Think along the lines of personal care, meal preparation, housecleaning, or recreation. Think about items that we often take for granted. As an example, those of us who wear glasses or contacts are using assistive technology, although we might not think about our glasses in this way. Just for fun, can you think of some assistive technology devices that are very high-tech? Take 10 minutes to make a list, and then we'll get back together.

- Was that hard or easy? What did your group come up with? What about:
 - Glasses or contacts
 - Back scrubber
 - Handheld shower
 - Divided plate, or plate with rim
 - Step stool
 - Long-handled window scraper
 - Rubber jar opener
 - Electric can opener
 - Velcro tennis shoes
 - Gardening bench
 - For the high-tech devices, consider devices that help you communicate with only your eyes (eye gaze-controlled computers), voice recognition software, whole-home safety and monitoring systems, or robotic assistive devices for individuals with physical disabilities.

Activity 2: Exploring the demonstration toolkit

Gather the items around the group for people to try. Note that the box has items for each of the four categories: attending to personal care, preparing meals, doing basic household chores, and engaging in recreational activity. There are also items that could be used in several of these categories. See the demonstration toolkit packing list for the name, price, and where each item can be bought.

- Ask participants:
 - Who knows what this item might be used for?
 - Have you ever used this item or one like it?
 - What is the benefit of using it?
 - What are the challenges?
 - Could this item be useful to you or to someone you know? In what ways?

Activity 3: Exploring assistive technology resources

Review the fact sheet and talk about costs, possible funding, where to find assistive technology, and where to go for more information. This is a great time to share what is available in your specific community and ask others in the audience for their experiences with assistive technology and local resources.

Additional Tips

- You may consider adding items bought in your community. This may help the audience realize that assistive technology is accessible close to home. You can share this information with your audience, just as you will information about the items in the demonstration toolkit.
- Connect with local disability organizations, non-profits, community service organizations, faith-based groups, community free stores, and others to distribute this information.
- Assistive technology is particularly useful for agricultural-focused professionals. This information, in addition to AgrAbility and other resources listed in the fact sheet, should be shared widely with agriculture/horticulture-focused Extension professionals and at field days or other relevant gatherings.
- Share the fact sheet with:
 - local libraries
 - senior centers
 - places people might wait – such as doctor's offices or physical therapy clinics
 - public health offices
 - community health workers and other advocates
 - community health fairs or at similar events

Assistive Technology Basics Evaluation

Please take a moment to respond to the questions below.

Date and location of presentation: _____

My county of residence: _____

Gender: Female Male Non-binary Other Prefer not to answer

Race: American Indian or Alaska Native Asian Black/African American
 Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander White Prefer not to respond

Ethnicity: Hispanic or Latino Non-Hispanic or Non-Latino Prefer not to respond

Age: under 18 years 18-29 years 30-59 years 60 to 75 years 75+ years
 Prefer not to respond

Do you currently provide care for someone else (such as an aging relative or an individual with a disability)?

Yes No Prefer not to respond

What is the most important thing you learned today about assistive technology?

What action will you take as a result of attending this program?

Please answer the following questions by checking the appropriate box.

1 = Strongly Agree 2 = Agree 3 = Neither Agree or Disagree 4 = Disagree 5 = Strongly Disagree

	1	2	3	4	5
As a result of this program, I can describe what assistive technology is.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
As a result of this program, I can list at least 3 examples of assistive technology devices.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
As a result of this program, I can describe the benefits of using assistive technology.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
As a result of this program, I know some questions to ask to see if assistive technology is right for me or the person I care for.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
As a result of this program, I know where I can find assistive technology devices.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
As a result of this program, I can describe some ways to pay for assistive technology.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
As a result of this program, I gained understanding of where to go for help with assistive technology.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am planning to find more information about assistive technology online or in my community.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am planning to buy an assistive technology device for myself or someone else.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Is there anything else about the program you would like to share?

References

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