

North Carolina Infant-Toddler Program Procedures

References: Assistive Technology Policy, AT Loan Procedures

Tracking Loaned AT Equipment

Introduction

Assistive Technology (AT) is a service required to be made available by the NC Infant-Toddler Program (ITP). To be eligible to access any assistive technology device or service through the Infant-Toddler Program, a child must be enrolled in the Infant-Toddler Program or have an Interim Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) and have identified on their IFSP the need to use assistive technology services and devices as described in the *Assistive Technology Procedures*.

When a family expresses a concern about their child's development and participation in daily routines and activities, a functional outcome is developed. If the Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) team agrees that some category of assistive technology (AT) may be needed by the child and family in order to achieve the established outcome(s), the exploration of assistive technology begins. AT services encompass assessment and equipment trial, adaptation of items in the home, regular monitoring by Service Coordinator and treating therapist, training and technical assistance for family and professionals and purchasing. Assessment and equipment trial loans occur while the IFSP team is in the decision-making process regarding assistive technology needs of the child and family. These loans are made to a family/child in consultation with IFSP team and can remain in the family's natural environment for trials and daily routines.

For the loan program to have a comprehensive inventory of AT equipment that is available in a timely manner, it is necessary for the Child Development Services Agency (CDSA) staff to monitor the use and return of the equipment. The following procedures will maximize access to and availability of the AT Loan Program inventory.

Procedures

1. Responsibilities of the Service Coordinator

- a. The EISC is to submit a ***NC ITP AT Loan Request Form*** to JIDRC. JIDRC will assign a value to each item once the form is returned to the EISC. The value is determined by an assessment of the condition of the equipment and market analysis of the cost. The value also indicates to families and providers the cost of the equipment should it be damaged beyond repair or lost.
- b. The EISC or Provider is to deliver the equipment to the child's natural environment and ensure training of family and caregiver. The equipment should be delivered after the EISC has thoroughly checked the equipment and it is fully functioning. A picture of the equipment may be taken by the AT Contact for equipment valued over \$500.00.
- c. The EISC arranges for acquisition of the assistive technology device(s) by the provider or family and secures the family's initials and signature on the ***NC ITP Assistive Technology Loan***

Agreement Form acknowledging receipt of device(s). The treating therapist may receive equipment to deliver to the family when adjustment of equipment and training is necessary. The provider can secure signature of the family on AT Loan Agreement and return signed form to Service Coordinator.

- d. The EISC/Provider is to educate the parent on all equipment being loaned, especially for positioning/mobility and augmentative communication equipment. For example, the Physical Therapist would review how to use a stander, gait trainer, or feeder seat and adjust it to the child's body. The Speech Language Pathologist would go over set up and operation of an augmentative communication device. The EISC will facilitate ongoing discussion amongst IFSP team, including the family, to ensure equipment is adjusted properly for child and family to use within daily activities and routines to achieve the IFSP outcome.
- e. The EISC discusses all information on AT Loan agreement , including the value of the equipment, with the parent(s) and the importance of maintaining the equipment in a clean manner and in good repair. The parent (and service provider, if appropriate) agrees to the loan by initialing and signing where appropriate on AT Loan Agreement form. The following script can be individualized and used by the EISC to decrease a parent's possible unease using an expensive AT.

The AT loaning program has the ability to offer many types of equipment at various costs including some AT devices that may be expensive due to the intricacy of the equipment and advanced technology. We want you to be aware that the device/equipment that your IFSP Team suggested for your child is valued at \$500/\$1000/\$2000. The IFSP Team feels that this is the most appropriate AT device for your family. We will support you in learning how to use it and monitor how your child responds to it. (Explain additional care needed to maintain equipment). Please let us know if you have any questions about the care and maintenance of the equipment which you are being loaned. We are happy to support the needs of your child and hope this equipment leads to the success of his/her goals.

- f. As part of the monitoring of outcomes, the EISC should seek to find out if the equipment is/is not successful for the child; if any repairs are needed; if equipment is being purchased and replaces loaned equipment and if the equipment is not being used by the family. The monitoring of AT equipment should occur at least every 90 days.
- g. When the equipment is no longer needed or a child is aging out of the program, the EISC/Provider makes arrangements with the family to return the AT equipment to the CDSA or picked up by EISC or Provider as soon as possible. If the EISC or Provider cannot pick up the items, they may ask the AT Contact or EISC supervisor to pick up the equipment .Within **five** days of returning the equipment to the CDSA, the EISC or AT contact completes and submits the **NC ITP AT Return/Transfer Form** to the AT Program indicating if the device is in good repair , clean, and ready for reloan.
- h. The EISC is responsible for sending out the **Aging Out Reminder Letter** to the family. JIRDC will send these letters via email to the EISC 45 days prior to the child's third birthday. Upon receipt, the EISC customizes the letter with the family's contact information and sends it to the family 30 days prior to the child's third birthday.

2. Process of Securing Lost/Unreturned AT Equipment

- a. The EISC will make three documented attempts using various methods such as phone call, home visit, and/or email to obtain the loaned AT equipment. The three attempts should be concurrent with attempts to contact a family lost to follow-up.
- b. If the EISC cannot secure the equipment in three attempts, the EISC will notify the AT Contact. The AT Contact will contact the parents/guardians by phone and/or AT Contact Letter requesting return of the equipment within 10 days from date of letter. The letter to the parents/guardians should outline the equipment to be returned, efforts made to obtain it, and a date for return.
- c. If the parent is still unresponsive, the AT Contact will notify JIRDC and send a copy of the letter sent to the family. JIRDC will call the parents/guardians requesting return of the equipment and will send out a follow up letter as well. JIRDC will send a copy of the letter to the AT Contact.
- d. If the parent is still unresponsive to attempts made by the EISC, the AT Contact, and JIRDC, the CDSA Director will send the Director Final AT Letter to the family requesting the AT equipment be returned giving a return by date. A template letter has been provided to AT Contacts and CDSA Director to use.
- e. If the parent/guardian fails to return the equipment, the AT Contact will complete an ***NC ITP AT Loan Return/Transfer Form*** and submit it to JIRDC. JIRDC will process the form and take the equipment off the AT Loan Inventory.
- f. If the parent/guardian notifies the EISC that the loaned AT equipment has been lost, the EISC or AT Contact completes the ***NC ITP AT Loan Return/Transfer Form*** and submits it to JIRDC. JIRDC will process the form and take the equipment off the AT Loan Inventory.