

Tech Talk

Helping children learn to their full potential

St. Paul Public Schools
Independent District #625
Assistive Technology Team

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AT for Recreation/Leisure

AT Provides Access to Recreation/Leisure Activities

Assistive Technology (AT) can be used to assist individuals with disabilities in accessing a variety of recreational and leisure activities such as sports, play activities, arts and social interaction. When they are built, public parks and recreational facilities are required to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) by providing accessibility for individuals with disabilities. In the same way, schools must provide students who have disabilities with opportunities to engage meaningfully in play, sports and art activities. These opportunities might include classes in visual and performing arts, physical education, playgrounds, field trips and nature hikes in addition to extra-curricular activities such as sports teams, theater, band, dance, and after-school clubs. Schools must provide assistive utensils and equipment that can be used to help students with disabilities to engage in the same activities as their non-disabled peers. These assistive supports can range from low-tech to high-tech devices.

- Beeping or lighted balls
- Sticky mitts and large bats
- All-terrain wheelchairs
- Specialized, sport-specific adapted equipment
- Adapted bikes, trikes and playground equipment

Arts and Crafts

- Stamps, cookie cutters and sponges as substitutes for paint brushes
- Adapted scissors and utensil holders
- Switch operated paint spinners and pottery wheels
- Dora the Explorer Talking Crayons
- Switch-adapted digital cameras

Performing Arts

- Addition of pictures and colors to sheet music
- Specially designed musical instruments
- Voice output devices
- Video Cameras

Equipment Examples for Recreation/Leisure Activities:

Games & Play

- Magnetic tape on game pieces and game board so that pieces do not fall out of place
- Braille board games
- Switch-adapted spinners
- Card shufflers


Sports and Exercise

- Balls of different sizes, weight and firmness

Remove Barriers with AT:


Using AT to remove the barriers to involvement in recreation/leisure activities can improve self-esteem, provide health benefits and strengthen social interactions. It is important that all students have the opportunity to participate in "fun" activities. Recreation/leisure activities are lifelong.

To learn more about how your child might benefit from AT for recreation/leisure, contact your child's IEP team leader.




Using AT at Home Rec/Leisure Tools

Large Easy-to-Hold Crayons




Melt and mold crayons

Finger Plays



A fun way to involve your child in a social group

Adapted Playground



Find one near you!



Parent Question

How can I help my child with a disability play or engage in recreation/leisure activities with other children?

- Explore helping your child make connections with peers who have similar interests.
- Consider hosting a play date at your home where the environment is already set up to meet your child's needs.
- Offer non-competitive games that provide action/involvement for all.
- Create opportunities for choice and decision making for your child and the other children to foster balanced relationships.
- Accommodate for the use of walkers and wheelchairs by allowing for more time and space.
- Consider bowling at a lane with ball ramps, pushers, grip handles and gutter bumpers
- Consider helping your child get involved with [Best Buddies](#), for one-to-one friendships and leadership development for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Media/App Review Sites:

Evaluating Apps and Media for Young Children

(Rubric of technical/user experience and content criteria for story and toy apps.)

Common Sense Media

(Independent reviews and age ratings for all types of media.)

Bridging Apps: Apps for Special Needs

(Training, education and professionally reviewed apps)

Factors to consider when selecting apps for your child:

- *absence of ads;*
- *privacy policy;*
- *switch access;*
- *adaptability;*
- *multiple levels for multiple abilities; and*
- *engagement, fun*

Parent Question

How can my child access community sports, camp and playground activities?

- [Accessible playgrounds in Minnesota](#)
- [St. Paul Public Schools Adapted Athletics](#)
- [Pacer's Fun Times Recreation and Sports](#) (Camp, horseback riding, skiing)
- [Miracle League Fields](#) (St. Paul, Blaine, Minnetonka, Eden Prairie)
- City/County Parks and Rec programs
- Community Education programs offered through local school districts
- Courage Kenny Rehabilitation Institute Adaptive Sports/Recreation [Minnesota Special Hockey](#)
- [National Sports Center for the Disabled \(NSCD\)](#)
- [Special Olympics Minnesota](#)
- [Reach for Resources Adaptive Recreation](#)
- [I Can Hoop](#)
- [In the Company of Kids Theatre & Dance](#)
- [YMCA Twin Cities Adaptive Sports and Swimming Programs](#)
- [American Association of Adapted Sports Programs, Inc. \(AAASP\) – School Programs](#)

Resources: AT for Recreation/Leisure Activities

- [Assistive Technology For Recreation and Leisure - Star](#)
- [The Assistive Technology Blog - AT for Recreation/Leisure](#)
- [SUPER – Still Useful Product and Equipment Referral \(Pacer Center\)](#)
- [Gillette Children's Adapted Bike Expo](#)
- [Switch Activities/Adapted Toys](#)
- [Therapeutic Swings and Swings \(eSpecial Needs\)](#)
- [GoBabyGo](#): Off-the-shelf motorized child vehicles purchased and customized for children with disabilities
- Switch-Adapted Digital Cameras

- [My Feet, Six Inches From the Ground: Disability, Kids and Our Connection with Nature](#)
- [Gaming Resources \(National Federation for the Blind\)](#)
- [Gamasutra- Designing Games that are Accessible to Everyone](#)
- [Skooq](#) - Accessible Musical instrument:
- [Beamz](#) – Inclusive, interactive music tool
- [Color band app](#) – free, music play using hand movement

[Zot Artz: Arts for All](#): Adaptive art tools for children with disabilities to use to create huge, amazing art pieces.

- [The 3Doodler](#): (3D Pen) Creates objects for learners who are blind or need visual spatial supports.
- [AT for Recreation/ ATSTAR](#)

Theaters with Sensory-Friendly Programming:

- AMC Theatres (AMC Rosedale 14 and Eden Prairie Mall 18)
- [Children's Theatre](#)
- [Hennepin Theatre Trust](#) (Orphem, State, Pentages, New Century)
- [Stages Theater](#) (Hopkins)