

# Assistive Technology for Mental Health and Self Care Resource Guide

## The Michigan Assistive Technology Program

[Visit the MATP Website](#)

Please take a minute to fill out our quick survey:

Link to Survey: <https://forms.gle/jB7cTPVbB8R7YRWG7>

**To request a demonstration or loan of Assistive Technology:**

[MATP Demo Request Link](#)

**Phone:** 800-578-0280 | **Email:** [AT@mymdrc.org](mailto:AT@mymdrc.org)

**Contact information for Presenters:**

Laura Hall – [laura@mymdrc.org](mailto:laura@mymdrc.org)

Aimee Sterk - [aimee@mymdrc.org](mailto:aimee@mymdrc.org)

Access our [Lending Library](#)

**Request a demonstration or a loan of a specific item on our website:**

<https://mymdrc.org/lending-library/>

**AT Device Trainings and [Video Library](#)**

Subscribe to our listserv to receive updates from MATP

Link: <https://tinyurl.com/SubscribeMDRC>

# What is Assistive Technology?

Assistive Technology or AT is any item, product, system, or equipment that improves life for people with disabilities.

## Mental Health and Neurodiversity

1 in 5 children and adults live with mental health disabilities

1 in 25 adults live with what is considered “serious” mental health disabilities

People with other disabilities often experience mental health disabilities as well.

People with disabilities frequently also experience trauma—a shocking, scary or dangerous experience that affects someone.

## Trauma and Disability

People with disabilities face almost double the rate of childhood trauma as the general population

Trauma is intersectional: People with low-income and educational attainment, people of color and people who identified as gay, lesbian or bisexual had significantly higher chance of having experienced adversity in childhood

Supports and tools build resilience and healing. People can both be recovering and acknowledge and live with trauma history

Childhood trauma can also be the cause of disability

## Disability Pride

Disability Pride is accepting and honoring our uniqueness and seeing it as a natural and beautiful part of human diversity.

Pride comes from celebrating our own heritage, culture, unique experiences, and contributions.

What's to gain from Disability Pride?

- Self-esteem, self-acceptance
- Support system/community with sense of belonging
- Accommodations
- Value of interdependence
- Life of honesty
- Appreciation for diversity

## Disability Pride & Mental Health/trauma

- Internalized ableism—when a person with a disability turns ableism (beliefs that people with disabilities are less valuable) inward.
- Disability pride fights internalized ableism
- Using AT acknowledges disability
- Asking for accommodations acknowledges disability
- Disability Pride takes practice
- Requesting and getting accommodations and using AT is practicing pride

## Benefits of AT

The most effective strategy for helping us do what we want to do

- Decline is slowed
- Fewer nursing home and hospital stays
- Greater functional independence
- Available where and when we need it
- Self direction

## Barriers to AT

- Lack of knowledge about what is available
- Lack of knowledge about where AT is available
- Funding/Insurance Barriers
- Fear of wasting money if AT doesn't work
- Societal Barriers/Stigma

## Choosing AT

- Start with people's goals
- Research device options
- Look at the environment
- Review resources
  - Financial
  - Personal/Friends/ family for set up install/maintenance
  - Programmatic

## AT for Self Regulation

Self-regulation is **the ability to manage positive or negative emotions, sensations, and thoughts.**

**It includes being able to:**

- regulate reactions to strong emotions like frustration, excitement, anger, embarrassment, and fear.
- calm down after something exciting or upsetting.
- focus on a task.
- refocus attention on a new task.
- control impulses.
- [Hammock Swing](#)
- [Autism Level Up: The Regulator](#)
- [Trek eBike](#)
- [Aurora Projector](#)
- [Sensate](#)
- [Fidget Worm](#)
- [Ono Roller](#)
- [Teeter Popper](#)
- [Sensasoft Squeeze Seat](#)
- [Cozy Canoe](#)
- Drums—rhythmic, repetitive movements are soothing and activate the brain in ways that are therapeutic. This can also be seen in biking, running, yoga, and other rhythmic activities.
- Maracas and other items that create a shaking movement when used—shaking off is a physical response that is seen in other animals too—

discharging the fight or flight energy. I frequently know my dog is calming down when I see him doing a full body shake.

- Stress Balls
- Heart Rate Monitors
  - [How TouchPoints Work – TheTouchPoint Solution™](#)
- Apps for Calming and Thinking
  - [GoNoodle](#)
  - [Zones of regulation app](#)
  - [breathe2relax - Apple](#) - [breathe2relax - Google Play](#)
- Self Regulation Games
  - Video: [Mightier Game Video](#)
  - [mightier game app and device](#)
- [Journaling](#)
  - [Apps for Journaling](#)
- Coloring Books and Pages
  - [The Calm Coloring Book](#)
  - [Adult Coloring Books](#)

## Sensory Supports

### AT for Touch

- [Fidget toys](#): spinners, blocks, pop its, balls
- SlimeSlime, Dough, Putty
- Tactile Activities
- Touch Screen Devices
- [Sensory Friendly Clothing](#)

### AT for Smell

- Humidifiers
- [Diffusers](#)

### AT for Oral Sensory - [List of Oral Sensory Aides](#)

- [Oral Chew Toys](#)
- Gum
- Feeding Tools

### AT for Hearing

- [noise canceling headphones](#)
- [Infant Headphones](#)
- [Sleep band Headphones](#)
- [Loop Earplugs](#)
- electronic devices: ipads / tablets
- Sensory Apps: Music, Meditation, Learning, and Play

## **AT for Sight - Light Sensitivity**

- Sunglasses
- Lamps
- Light Bulbs with Various Light Settings

## **AT for Sight and Focus**

- [Reading Guides](#)
- [Bionic Reading](#)

## **AT for Daily Living**

Daily Activities that can be affected by mental health and trauma:

- Cooking and eating
- Bathing/dressing/self care
- Organizing your day
- Getting to and from work and school
- Taking care of yourself and your family
- Recreation
- Socializing
- Performance at school or work

## **Handling Life AT and hacks**

[How to keep house while drowning](#) by KC Davis, LPC, is a guidebook for living while managing symptoms.

- Use paper products
- Smart Ovens
- Delivery Services
- Apps for cooking with what you have

- Strategies for cleaning

## AT for Sleeping

- [List of Sleeping Aides](#)
- [Sleepsack](#)
- [Weighted blanket](#) - [More information on weighted blankets](#)
- [Compression Sheet](#)
- [Weighted stuffed animals](#)
- [Sonisleep Sleepbar](#)
- [White Noise Machines](#)
- Night Lights - [Best Night Lights and how to choose](#)
- Night Light Projectors - [Best Night Lights from Amazon](#)
- [Bedtime Routine System](#)
- [Wake Up Light / Sleep Light](#)

## Organizing & Memory

- [Smart watch comparison guide](#)
- [Rocketbook reusable scannable notebook](#)
- [Tile Mate Bluetooth trackers](#)
- [Echo Show/smart speakers & screens](#)
  - Timers
  - Alarms for wake up
  - Care Hub
  - Routines
  - Schedule
  - Reminders
  - Video calls
  - Meditation, read recipes, music, books, podcasts, games
  - Environmental controls (security system, thermostate)
  - Lights, appliances
  - Show & Tell feature
- [CanPlan App](#)
- [Time Timer](#)

## AT for Memory

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z9Sgc7CLsSs>

- Smart devices - cellphone, iPad, tablet, watch
  - Voice Assistant
    - [Best Voice Assistant Test Video](#)
  - Smart Speakers
    - Alexa device - [Set Reminders with Alexa](#)
    - Google Home - Set Reminders with Google Home
  - Recording Devices
    - [Pen Friend](#) Voice Labeler
  - Organizing Apps
    - [Google Keep - Notes and lists](#) - organizing, transitioning, adhd
    - [Todoist](#) - create notes and lists, organizing, transitioning, adhd

## Structure and routine

- Calendar and reminders using smart devices
  - [Google Assistant](#)
  - [Samsung Bixby](#)
  - [Use Reminders on your iPhone, iPad, or iPod touch](#)
  - [Set Reminders with Alexa](#)
  - [Set Up Routines with Alexa](#)
- [Google Keep - Notes and lists](#) - organizing, transitioning, adhd
- [Todoist](#) - create notes and lists, organizing, transitioning, adhd
- [Brili](#) - an app that helps families with routines
  - [Demonstration Video of Brili App](#)
- Schedules
- Timers/Clocks
- [Routine Systems](#)
- Checklists

## Apps for Executive Function

- [Pomodoro Focus Timer app](#)
- [Daylio Premium app](#)



- [Productive Pro app](#)
- [Choiceworks app](#)
- [Choiceworks Calendar app](#)
- [Cold Turkey Blocker Pro](#)
- [Forest app](#)

## AT for Safety

- [Video Overview of Smart Home](#)
- [Motion Sensor Alarms](#)
- [Ring Doorbell Camera](#)
- [Sensor Lights](#)
- [Smart Plugs](#)
- [Bathwater Thermometer](#)
- [MedCenter Monthly Medication Organizer](#)

## GPS Tracking

- [Angel Sense](#)
- [GPS Watches](#)
- [Find My iPhone](#) - [Location Sharing](#)
- [Apple AirTags](#)

## Technology Safety

- [TechSafety](#)
- [Safety Net Project - Toolkit for Survivors](#)

## Mental Health Apps

Remember to practice self-care and make self-care a priority

- [Calm](#) - Meditation, anxiety
- [Moodfit](#) - overall mental health and wellness
- [Clear Fear](#) - anxiety
- [Nuna](#) - Virtual Companion
- [The Safe Place](#) - BIPOC Mental Wellness and Self Care
- [Shine](#) - BIPOC Mental Wellness and Self Care

- [Google Keep - Notes and lists](#) - organizing, transitioning, adhd
- [Todoist](#) - create notes and lists, organizing, transitioning, adhd
- [PTSD Coach](#) - PTSD
- [PTSD Coach Online](#)
- [PTSD Family Coach](#)

## AT for Mental Health - Wearable Devices

- [Touch Points](#)
- [mightier game app and device](#) | [Mightier Game Video](#)
- [CalmiGo](#)
- [Apollo](#) | [Video Review](#)

## Apps for Substance Use and Recovery

Consider Symptoms

- Anxiety
- Executive function
- Safety
- Reminders/med management
- [Quit Drinking App](#)
- [24 Hours a Day](#)
- [Mindshift CBT](#)
- [Everything AA](#)
- [Sober Sidekick](#)
- [Check Up and Choices App](#)

## AT for Building connections

- [Apps for Communicating and to assist in telling stories](#)
- [Journaling - parent child](#)
- [Companion Pets](#)
- [Alexa - Echo Show](#)
- [Caribu App - Interactive Video Call](#)
- Gaming - [Accessible Gaming Tech Tuesday Video](#)
- Accessible Communication devices
  - [proloquo2go](#)
  - [Go Talk App](#)

- [Go Talk Device](#)

## AT for Crafting

- [Suction cup scissors](#)
- [Adult coloring book](#)
- [Paint brushes with wider grips](#)
- [Angled table-top easel](#)
- [Do A Dot Art Marker](#)

## Self Advocacy and AT for Self Advocacy

- Speaking up for yourself
- Making your own decisions about your life
- Finding support for yourself
- Reaching out to others for support and friendship
- Problem-solving
- Notes apps
- Livescribe or other recording devices
- Choosing ways to communicate that work for you
- Using internet and social media to connect for supports and information

### [AT for Youth Presentation](#)

- [AT for Kids who Experienced Trauma Blog](#)
- [Michigan AT Loan Fund](#)
- [Legal Supports](#)
- [ACEs Quiz](#)
- [Therapy Den](#)
- [Therapist Search](#)
- [Safety Net Project - Toolkit for Survivors](#)

## PTSD Trauma support groups and forums

- [Support Group Search](#)
- [The Best Online PTSD Support Groups of 2022 - Healthline Picks](#)
- [20 PTSD Forums, Discussions and Message Boards Blog](#)
- [Sensory processing disorder parent support](#)

## Trauma Services

- [MICHIGAN COALITION TO END DOMESTIC & SEXUAL VIOLENCE](#)
- [The Firecracker Foundation](#) - provides holistic healing services to child survivors of sexual trauma under the age of 18 and their families in the area of Mid-Michigan.
- [Michigan Designated Trauma Facilities](#)
- [Community Mental Health Directory](#)
- [End Violent Encounters \(EVE\)](#) - supportive services to survivors of domestic and sexual violence, stalking, and elder abuse.