



Spring News 2021

Technology Solutions for Life's Limitations

Greetings!

DakotaLink hopes that you are staying healthy through these extraordinary times with COVID-19! It is looking like we can see the end of the tunnel now with the 3 different vaccines that we have.

We have hired a new Assistive Technology Specialist in Sioux Falls which has been open since last summer. He started on March 1st and worked in Rapid City for initial training then came back to Sioux Falls to work with our folks on this side of the state. His name is Josh Gustafson, and we are very happy to have him.

DakotaLink's Status Regarding COVID-19

All our staff are continuing to use PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) when visiting our clients. That includes masks, gloves, and shoe covers. We are also asking before any visit, if there are any illnesses in the establishment we are going into. Several of our staff have either the first vaccine or both. Hopefully, we will be looking somewhat back to "normal" by the end of the summer!

As you likely know, all conferences and in-person gatherings have been either cancelled or postponed until further notice.

We had our first Virtual Leadership Symposium through Zoom at the end of March that went smoothly. It will be nice to get back to Washington DC next year to meet with the other AT Managers throughout the US in person. We are continuing our ATAP Membership calls (Zoom Meetings) striving for reauthorization of the 21st Century Assistive Technology Act.

News from DHS

Are you a person with a disability who is seeking employment?

If so, Vocational Rehabilitation may be able to help. Check out a description of services and see our VR handbook at our website at <https://dhs.sd.gov/rehabservices/vr.aspx>. Contact the office nearest you and our staff from the Division of Rehabilitation Services will help you get started with services that you need to obtain employment. Services vary considerably based on your employment goal and what you need to obtain that goal. Assistive technology (AT) is one of the services that we offer; AT could be low-tech like a pencil grip or high-tech like a voice-activated device.

Visit our website or contact us today to learn more!

New Assistive Technology Articles

Below are some recent links to Assistive Technology articles from around the country that are using some new concepts and some that have evolved over the years:

3 Ways to Accommodate Employees with Disabilities

<https://www.lawdepot.com/blog/3-ways-to-accommodate-employees-with-disabilities/>

Assistive Technology Supports Seniors to Live at Home Longer in North Dakota

<https://at3centerblog.com/2021/03/31/assistive-technology-supports-seniors-to-live-at-home-longer-in-north-dakota/>

AT Programs Respond to Vaccine Rollout

<https://at3centerblog.com/2021/03/22/at-programs-respond-to-vaccine-rollout/>

How the Able-bodied Can do Better with Disabled Neighbors Like Me

https://www.washingtonpost.com/health/how-the-able-bodied-can-do-better-with-disabled-neighbors-like-me/2021/04/02/49dd971a-8e6f-11eb-a730-1b4ed9656258_story.html?fbclid=IwAR0sC1pNgwWsh5jWOb0IBTHUuxuomr_z7wb5jFk7Pso8lzqSBwSEckv2DPY

Why Are Rates of Disability Among Native American Children Going Up?

<https://thehill.com/changing-america/respect/accessibility/546521-why-are-rates-of-disability-among-native-american?fbclid=IwAR3UBW5gJt8lOkVfRMksdVbXnDVSldBPfsVxGpV34wxCw6iB6OnAfzDGRPY>

Celebrate AT Awareness Day

<https://at3centerblog.com/2021/03/25/wanted-your-favorite-assistive-technology/>

Social Networking

We continue our efforts in social networking getting a great deal of traffic on Facebook and share posts with ATAP, AT3, ILC, DHS, DSS and MERR. More resource information on our website: <https://www.dakotalink.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/AT-Resource-Directory-2017.pdf>

Other Resources:

<https://covid.sd.gov/>

<https://www.atia.org/covid19-resources/>

<https://www.ataporg.org/>

<https://www.at3center.net/>

Low Interest Loans

We also want to remind everyone of our low interest loan program. The loans are designed to fit your budget and we will work with you to create affordable payback payments. We will also help you fill out the application if you have any concern with that process. The application is on our website, but here is the direct link:

<https://www.dakotalink.net/at-funding>

DakotaLink strives to maintain its professionalism by earning a RESNA ATP certification. (ATP – Assistive Technology Professional). We currently have 5 staff with their ATP certification and will continue to help the newer employee's gain that status. To maintain these credentials, we must complete a specific amount of CEU's (Continuing Education Credits) on a biennial basis. We have been doing that mostly through webinars that ATAP provides through an agreement with ATIA.



Remember, we are on Facebook! So, be sure to “like” us to see what we are up to on a daily basis: <https://www.facebook.com/DakotaLinkAT/>

Be safe and healthy!

Best,

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DakotaLink is the South Dakota Assistive Technology Program.

Our mission is to assist individuals with functional limitations; due to a disability, illness, injury, or the effects of aging; maximize their potential whether at home or in the community, at school, at work, or at play through the use of Assistive Technology.

An assistive technology device is any equipment or tool that helps individual overcome limitations in daily activities.

Assistive technology services assist individuals to acquire, use, modify, or maintain an assistive technology device.