



**Enhancing Lives Through  
Assistive Services and  
Technology**

# Florida Alliance for Assistive Services and Technology

FAAST, Inc. is a 501 (c)(3) not-for-profit organization as of October 20, 1994, funded by the U.S. Department of Education, Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) through the Assistive Technology Act of 2004 and through Florida General Revenue funds under §413.407, F.S. FAAST, Inc. is sponsored by the Florida Department of Education, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation.





# FAAST Mission

Our Mission is to improve the quality of life for all Floridians with disabilities through advocacy and awareness activities that increase access to and acquisition of assistive services and technology.



# FAAST RDC Projects

- Atlantic Regional Demonstration Center (UCF – Orlando)
- Central Florida Regional Demonstration Center (Tampa General Hospital)
- Gulf Coast Regional Demonstration Center (CIL – Pensacola)
- Northeast Regional Demonstration Center (Hope Haven - Jacksonville)
- Northwest Regional Demonstration Center (FAAST Headquarters – Tallahassee)
- South Florida Regional Demonstration Center (University of Miami)



# FAAST Core Services

- Statewide and Six Regional AT Device Loan Programs
- AT Device Reutilization/Refurbishing/Recycling Programs
- AT Skills Development Trainings and Assessments
- AT Device Demonstrations and Trainings
- IDEA and Rehabilitation Act Transition Trainings Leading to Employment
- Structured Presentations and AT Device Exhibits at Educational Conferences, Exhibit Fairs and Disability Specific Events
- Public Awareness Activities
- Conducts Baseline Data Performance Measures and Satisfaction Surveys



# FAAST HQ Statewide AT Device Loan Program

[www.faast.org/programs/device-loans](http://www.faast.org/programs/device-loans)

- To find items in the FAAST Assistive Technology (AT) Device Loan Program database, users can search for items by keyword or browse the available items by category. Items may then be added to an online AT loan request. FAAST requires AT device loan agreements.
- Devices are shipped to the borrower and returned to FAAST at no cost to the user.
- Items are loaned for a term of 30 days.



# Six Regional AT Device Loan Programs

*RDCs lend a wide variety of assistive technology devices to consumers and professionals*

Communication Devices

Computer Hardware/Software

Environmental Control Devices

Hearing Devices

Home/Personal Devices

Learning/Cognitive Aids

Mobility Aids

Recreation Devices

Telephone and Accessories

Visual Aids



# AT Device Reutilization, Refurbishing & Recycling Programs

- AT Reutilization Programs provide repair, recycling or other reutilization of AT given directly to individuals with disabilities, which may include computers, durable medical equipment, and other previously used AT.
- FAAST partners with Regional Demonstration Centers, Centers for Independent Living, Goodwill, The Able Trust and other entities to conduct reutilization activities statewide.





# AT Skills Development Trainings and Assessments

- (1) skills-development training in assessing the need for assistive technology devices and assistive technology services; and
- (2) training in the importance of multiple approaches to assessment and implementation necessary to meet the individualized needs of individuals with disabilities.



# Device Demonstrations

- RDCs provide demonstrations on the use and applicability of AT devices and services for individuals with disabilities, family members, professionals and others.
- Specific AT device demonstrations compare the features and benefits of a particular AT device or category of devices for an individual or a small group.
- One of the purposes of a device demonstration is to help enable an individual to make an informed choice before deciding whether or not to purchase AT.



# Training Activities

- Device specific trainings are designed to acclimate users to assistive technology in various settings.
- These activities include working with individuals on how to use a particular AT device or to troubleshoot problems with AT devices.



# Transition Trainings Leading to Employment

Effective transition services play a critical role in allowing students with disabilities to achieve their post-school goals for employment, continued education and community living. It is essential that students receive assistive technology assessments to determine what assistive technology resources would best enable the student to achieve their goals as independently as possible. IEPs should clearly state all interagency responsibilities for the provision of transition services. This compels the Florida Department of Education and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation to focus on interagency cooperation to help ensure the coordination of transition services. The definition of transition services is defined in IDEIA, as amended, at 20 U.S.C. § 1401(34).

# Transition

The term “transition services” means a coordinated set of activities for a child with a disability that--

- (A) is designed to be within a results-oriented process, that is focused on improving the academic and functional achievement of the child with a disability to facilitate the child's movement from school to post-school activities, including post-secondary education, vocational education, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation;
- (B) is based on the individual child's needs, taking into account the child's strengths, preferences, and interests; and
- (C) includes instruction, related services, community experiences, the development of employment and other postschool adult living objectives, and, when appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation



## **Structured Presentations at Educational Conferences, Exhibit Fairs, and Disability Specific Events**

- Presentations are designed to address the use and applicability of AT devices and services.
- RDCs conduct presentations at assistive technology conferences as well as local community events in their region.



# **AT Device Exhibits at Educational Conferences and Disability Specific Events**

Assistive Technology Industry Association (ATIA)  
Ambassadors for Aging  
Children's Week  
World Congress on Disabilities  
Developmental Disabilities Awareness Day  
Disability Mentoring Day  
National Disability Employment Awareness Month  
Sportsability & Many Others . . .



# Public Awareness Activities

The Regional Demonstration Centers (RDCs) provide public awareness activities to:

Consumers

Families

State and local governments

Grassroots disability organizations

Not-for-profits serving individuals with

Disabilities and elders

Workforce investment systems

State Vocational Rehabilitation centers

Public and private employers

Public schools and colleges

Providers of Social, medical, educational,  
employment, and transportation services for

individuals with disabilities





# Public Awareness Activities

- The FAAST HQ and the six RDCs provide information to targeted individuals and entities relating to the availability, benefits, appropriateness and costs of assistive technology devices and AT services.



# Baseline Data Annual Statistics

- Improving Access to AT in:
  - Education (4,668 individuals)
  - Employment (1,138 individuals)
  - Community Living (3,132 individuals)
  - IT/Telecommunications (696 individuals)
  
- Improving Acquisition of AT in:
  - Education (478 individuals)
  - Employment (1,445 individuals)
  - Community Living (646 individuals)



# FAAST Regional Demonstration Centers

- FAAST contracts with various entities throughout the state to establish regional demonstration centers that serve consumers at a regional level.
- RDCs ensure that all individuals in all counties have access to device lending, device demonstration, and AT Skills Development Trainings and Assessments.



# Gulf Coast Regional Demonstration Center

## Staff

**Cheri Hofmann**

(Regional Coordinator)

**Laura Jo Hust**

(Program Specialist)

FAAST Gulf Coast RDC, located in Pensacola at the CIL Disability Resource Center, serves individuals in the following counties:

**Bay**

**Escambia**

**Okaloosa**

**Santa Rosa**

**Walton**



# Northwest Regional Demonstration Center

## Staff

**André Howard**

(Regional Coordinator)

**Kirstin Kovary**

(Program Specialist)

FAAST Northwest RDC, located in Tallahassee at the FFAST Headquarters, serves individuals in the following counties:

**Gulf**

**Holmes**

**Washington**

**Bay**

**Jackson**

**Calhoun**

**Gadsden**

**Liberty**

**Franklin**

**Leon**

**Wakulla**

**Jefferson**

**Madison**

**Taylor**



# Northeast Regional Demonstration Center

## Staff

**Kelli Bloom**

(Regional Coordinator)

**Pat Burr**

(Program Specialist)

FAAST Northeast RDC, located in Jacksonville at Hope Haven Children's Clinic and Family Center, serves individuals in the following counties:

**Nassau**

**Duval**

**Flagler**

**St. John's**

**Clay**

**Putnam**

**Marion**

**Baker**

**Union**

**Bradford**

**Alachua**

**Hamilton**

**Columbia**

**Gilchrist**

**Levy**

**Suwannee**

**Lafayette**

**Dixie**



# Atlantic Regional Demonstration Center

## Staff

**Jennifer Kent-Walsh, Ph.D., CCC-SLP**

(Regional Coordinator & Center Director)

**Pamela Resnick, M.A., CCC-SLP**

(Assistant Regional Coordinator & Lead Assistive Technology Specialist)

The FFAST Atlantic RDC located in Orlando at the University of Central Florida, Communication Disorders Clinic, serves individuals in the following counties:

**Volusia**

**Seminole**

**Osceola**

**Orange**

**Brevard**

**Indian River**

**Okeechobee**

**St. Lucie**

**Martin**

**Palm Beach**



# Central Florida Regional Demonstration Center

## Staff

**Annie Blackburn**

(Program Assistant)

**Lindsay Dapp**

(Program Assistant)

**Nancy Mashberg**

(Regional Coordinator)

The FFAST Central Florida RDC, located in Tampa at the Rehabilitation Center within Tampa General Hospital, serves individuals in the following counties:

**Hardee**

**Citrus**

**DeSoto**

**Hernando**

**Highlands**

**Hillsborough**

**Lake**

**Manatee**

**Pasco**

**Pinellas**

**Polk**

**Sarasota**

**Sumter**





# South Florida Regional Demonstration Center

## Staff

**Ana Nevares, M.A.**

(Project Coordinator)

**Michelle Schladant, Ph.D.**

(Project Director)

FAAST South Florida RDC, located in Miami at the University of Miami, Mailman Center for Child Development, serves individuals in the following counties:

**Broward**  
**Charlotte**  
**Collier**  
**Glades**  
**Hendry**

**Lee**  
**Miami-Dade**  
**Monroe**  
**Palm Beach**



# Regional Demonstration Center Contact Information

## **FAAST Gulf Coast RDC**

3600 N Pace Blvd, Pensacola, FL 32505

Voice and TDD: (850) 595-5566 or (877) 245-2457

## **FAAST Northwest RDC**

3333 West Pensacola Street

Building 100, Suite 140, Tallahassee, Florida 32304

Voice: (850) 487-3278 Toll Free: (888) 788-9216 TDD: (877) 506-2723

## **FAAST Northeast RDC**

4600 Beach Boulevard

Jacksonville, FL 32207

Voice: (904) 346-5100 TDD: (904) 346-5141



# Regional Demonstration Center Contact Information

## **FAAST Central Florida RDC**

Tampa General Rehabilitation Center

6 Tampa General Circle Room 214

Tampa, FL 33606

Voice: (813) 844-7591 TDD: (813) 844-7767

## **FAAST Atlantic RDC**

University of Central Florida Communication Disorders Clinic

12424 Research Parkway, Suite 155 (Research Pavilion)

Orlando, FL 32826

Voice: (407) 882-0468

## **FAAST South Florida RDC** 1601 N.W. 12th Avenue Room 2018

Miami FL, 33136

Voice/TTY: (305) 243-5706



# Web-based Trainings Enhancing FAAST Services

- RDCs are offered the opportunity to participate in up to 50 web-based trainings per year.
- These instructional online events are designed to increase knowledge, skills and competencies in a particular area related to AT.



# Statewide Programs and Services

- FFAST New Horizon Fund Program
- *AT Bay*





# FAAST New Horizon Fund Program

<http://www.faast.org/New-Horizon-Fund>

- For those who qualify, the New Horizon Fund Program is a low-interest loan program of the Florida Alliance for Assistive Services and Technology, Inc. (FAAST).
- The New Horizon Fund is enabled through the Assistive Technology Act of 2004, funded by the Rehabilitation Services Administration.
- The program offers Floridians with disabilities credit opportunities while purchasing equipment and items that will improve their overall quality of life.
- The New Horizon Fund offers Assistive Technology and Small Business Loan Programs.



# ***ATBay***

[www.atbay.faast.org](http://www.atbay.faast.org)

- *ATBay*, hosted by FFAST, is an online program for individuals who wish to buy, sell, or trade assistive technology devices.



# The FAAST Website Features

## FAAST News

<http://www.faast.org/news>

- The *News* section of the FAAST website provides information regarding periodic Requests For Proposals which invite applications to establish or maintain a Regional Demonstration Center Project.
- *FAAST Access Magazine* is source of information on assistive technology trends, news, education, FAAST programs and services, engaging dialogue and resources for self-advocacy, inspiring stories from consumers, caregiver columns, advice from therapists and other professionals and much more.
- The online calendar provides up-to-date information on FAAST's Board of Directors committee meetings.





# FAAST Website Features Current Self-Help Resource Guides

<http://www.faast.org/resources/library>

The FAAST self-help guides are inclusive of up to date resource information with hyperlinks from the table of contents to the documents to appropriate cites to applicable federal/state laws and helpful websites making these self-help guides more user-friendly to navigate.



# General Self-Help Resource Guides

- **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Site Survey Instrument - *Building Accessibility Evaluation Survey***
- **Access2Go User Tools Manual**
- **Employment Resources and Self-Help Guide**
- **Resource and Self Help Guide for Children with Disabilities and their Families**
- **Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act, Reauthorized 2004 Resource Guide**
- **General Housing Resource Guide**
- **Nursing Home and Health Care Facility Resource Guide**
- **General Resource and Self Help Information for Older Individuals with Disabilities**
- **Got A Plan? Emergency Preparedness Self-Help Resources**
- **Accessible Document and Website Accessibility Resource Guide**



# **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Site Survey Instrument**

## ***Building Accessibility Evaluation Survey***

- The emphasis of this ADA site survey instrument, which is effective as of July 1, 2010, is the removal of architectural barriers. FAAST, Inc.'s objective in publishing this ADA site survey is to promote assistive services for individuals with disabilities as well as equal access to facilities under the ADA.
- This ADA site survey is designed to assist ADA site survey teams in conducting self-evaluation surveys and engaging in collaborative efforts that are designed to facilitate practical enhancements to facilities thereby increasing compliance with the ADA and the Florida Accessibility Code for Building Construction.

# Access2Go User Tools Manual

- This publication is a companion to the FAAST Access2Go Flash Drive featuring software applications for adapted computer access.
- The Access2Go Flash Drive features over 30 accessible software applications are available through the convenience of a flash drive, with no software to install. FAAST's Access2Go provides a user-friendly and affordable way to adapt computers in computer labs, classrooms and workplaces.



# General Employment Resources and Self-Help Guide

- This user-friendly self help guide provides government and private resources and detailed information for job-seekers with disabilities.
- This publication features information regarding transition, job accommodations and self-employment among many other topics.



# **General Resource and Self Help Guide for Children with Disabilities and their Families**

- This self-help resource guide provides general resource and self-help information to assist in navigating available resources for children with disabilities for state officials, parents, family members, caregivers, guardians, advocates/representatives, and other interested parties.



# Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement (IDEIA) Resource Guide

- This resource guide is provided by the Florida Alliance for Assistive Services and Technology, Inc. (FAAST). It was created to provide general resource and self-help information on the individualized education program (IEP) process and other applicable federal/state laws and regulations for students with disabilities, parents, family members, caregivers, guardians, advocates/representatives and other interested parties.
- This resource guide is intended to promote collaboration with school district officials and to provide resource information as the IEP negotiation process can be challenging.







# Nursing Home and Health Care Facility Resource Guide

- This guide features information on Residents' Rights, Florida's Department of Elder Affairs Long Term Care Ombudsman Program, Agency for Health Care Administration, Department of Children and Families Adult Protective Services Responsible for Investigating Abuse and Neglect, Resident Grievance Procedures, the Comprehensive Assessment Review and Evaluation Services (CARES) and other helpful resources.



# **General Resource and Self Help Information for Older Individuals with Disabilities**

- This resource contains information regarding the Older Americans Act (OAA), the Florida Department of Elder Affairs (DOEA), the Community Care for the Elderly Act, Senior Citizen Centers, Emergency Preparedness, Elder Justice Centers, disability-specific resources, fraud prevention and many other helpful topics.
- The online version of the guide features links to relevant websites and publications.



# Got A Plan? Emergency Preparedness Self-Help Resources

- The Atlantic hurricane season is June 1st through November 30th. In addition, fires, floods, and other emergencies can strike at any time throughout the year. All Floridians need to prepare in advance for disasters. This document provides links to helpful websites, videos, articles, and other information about emergency preparedness for persons with disabilities.



# Accessible Document and Website Accessibility Resource Guide

- In light of the requirement to provide documents in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act, and under §282.601 - .606, Florida Statutes respectively, the Florida Alliance for Assistive Services and Technology, Inc. (FAAST) offers this self-help resource guide for individuals with disabilities, document developers, writers, information technology professionals and web administrators.

# Public Policy Initiatives

- FAAST regularly participates in activities annually that have impact on legal and policy barriers to the delivery of assistive services.
- Board members, staff and regional representatives advocate to increase the awareness and facilitate the change of laws, regulations, policies, practices, procedures, and organizational structures, that facilitate the availability or provision of assistive technology devices and assistive technology services.



# Public Policy Initiatives

*For example, FAAST and our partners successfully advocated for:*

- An amendment to Florida Statute that provides for reasonable timeframes for assistive technology assessments in grades K through 12 during the 2011 session within HB 1255
- AT Follows the Student: The provision of interagency agreements to allow AT to remain with a student as they transition throughout education (SB 2550)
- Protection for funding of Early Steps Part C, which provides vital services for infants and toddlers at risk of developmental delays
- The continuation of General Revenue funds to provide direct services through FAAST and our RDCs



# FAAST Assistive Technology Mobile Unit

FAAST brings assistive technology to communities throughout Florida with its expertly outfitted van.



# FAAST Headquarters

- FAAST's statewide headquarters is home to the Northwest Florida Regional Demonstration Center and the Statewide AT Device Loan Program.
- The location is fully accessible and situated within walking distance of Tallahassee Community College, Goodwill Industries, the local Health Department, and several other vital community services.







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