

## Pacific ADA and IT Center

Pacific Disability and Business  
Technical Assistance Center  
(Pacific DBTAC)  
555 12th Street, Suite 1030  
Oakland, CA 94607-4046

Technical Assistance:

**1-800-949-4232 (V&TTY)**

**510-285-5600 (V&TTY)**

Website:

**[www.pacdbtac.org](http://www.pacdbtac.org)**

Email:

**[adatech@pdbtac.com](mailto:adatech@pdbtac.com)**

Pacific ADA & IT Center (Pacific DBTAC) is committed to building a partnership between the disability and education communities and to promoting full and unrestricted participation in society for persons with disabilities through training, outreach and technical assistance. The Center's work is made possible by a grant from the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR).

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# ACCESSIBILITY

## Accessibility Tips

Series #1

**Quick tips for enhancing  
the learning experience of  
students in all schools.**

## General Principles of Accessible Information Technology



To request further materials or information on Accessible IT, please call us on our free Technical Assistance hotline at 1-800-949-4232, send an email to [adatech@pdbtac.com](mailto:adatech@pdbtac.com) or use the contact form on our web site. We hope that you'll find this series valuable.

**Q What is Information Technology (IT)?**

**A** IT includes, but is not limited to, telecommunications products such as telephones, information kiosks and transaction machines, World Wide Web sites, multimedia, and office equipment such as copiers and fax machines. Computer hardware, software, operating systems and networks are also included. The design of some electronic and information technology makes it difficult or impossible for individuals with specific disabilities to use it effectively.

**Q What is Assistive Technology (AT)?**

**A** Assistive Technology is a device or software that substitutes for or enhances the function of some impaired ability. AT includes screen readers, keyboards and single switches, and is sometimes referred to as Adaptive Technology.

**Q What is Accessible Information Technology (Accessible IT)?**

**A** Accessible IT is technology that can be used by people with a wide range of abilities and disabilities. It incorporates the principles of universal design, whereby each

user is able to interact with the technology in ways that work best for him or her. Accessible IT is either directly accessible, in other words, it is usable without Assistive Technology, or it is compatible with standard AT.

**Q How can the use of Accessible Information Technology (Accessible IT) be beneficial in an educational setting?**

**A** The use of Accessible IT helps assure that all students and staff can participate in and benefit from all educational and administrative activities that involve the use of technology. Below are a few examples:

**Accessible web pages** allow students with disabilities, including those who have sensory impairments, to access information; share their work; communicate with peers, teachers, and mentors; and take advantage of distance learning options.

**Accessible instructional software** on disks, CDs, or other media, enables students with disabilities to participate side-by-side with their peers in

computer labs and in computer labs and classrooms as they complete assignments; collaborate with peers; create and view presentations, documents, and spreadsheets; and actively participate in simulations and all other academic activities.

**Accessible telecommunications and office equipment** including faxes, copiers and TTY, make communication and educational administrative functions accessible to everyone, including those with mobility, visual, and hearing impairments.

This document is available in alternate formats, on CD, in large print and on audiotape, by contacting the Pacific ADA & IT Center (Pacific DBTAC). Please call us on our free Technical Assistance hotline at 1(800) 949-4232, send an email to [adatech@pdbtac.com](mailto:adatech@pdbtac.com) or use the contact form on our web site: <http://www.pacdbtac.org>