



northcott

Computer Assistive Technology Services

# Computer Assistive Technology Services



The Computer Assistive Technology Services (CATS) provides information, advice and support regarding assistive technology options for people with disabilities. Assistive technology offers people with disabilities increased independence in the areas of computer access, communication and access to everyday appliances at school, home and work. CATS is staffed by speech pathologists and occupational therapists with a high level of expertise in assistive technology.

CATS can provide assistance with:

### Access Options

Some people with disabilities can't use the regular mouse and keyboard to access the computer. In these situations, the occupational therapists can provide advice on:

- Alternative mouse, keyboard and switch options.
- Software to assist with computer access.

Other people with disabilities are unable to independently operate appliances in their home such as their lights, TV, air-conditioner or stereo. Advice can be provided on alternative ways to control appliances.

### Communication Options

Some people with disabilities have difficulty communicating verbally. This can impact on social interaction and

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independence. The speech pathologists at CATS can provide advice on:

- Alternative communication systems such as text or picture based books and visual aids
- Appropriate voice output communication devices where the user can press a button and a message is spoken.

Please Note: CATS do not sell equipment.

### CATS Services

CATS offer a range of services for children and adults with any disability, their family members, carers, teachers, therapists and others.

#### List of Services

- **Advisory Sessions:** Appointments for individuals are available at Northcott Disability Services Parramatta office or other settings, such as homes or schools. Recommendations for assistive technology are based on the needs, preferences and skills of the individual.
- **Reports:** A brief report is routinely provided following an advisory session. Comprehensive reports are available on request.
- **Rural visits:** CATS travel to regional centres in NSW to provide advisory sessions and education.
- **Education:** Workshops, in-services and equipment demonstrations can be provided to individuals, their families, educators and therapists on request. A calendar of commonly-requested training is available.
- **Information Service:** Staff are available to answer inquiries by phone/email. Information on equipment including cost and supplier details can be provided.
- **Technology Loan Pool:** A range of assistive technology is available for short-term hire. This allows trial of equipment prior to purchase to ensure suitability.
- **Tours:** Regular tours of CATS providing an overview of assistive technology are scheduled throughout the year. Contact CATS to make bookings.