

# Use evidence-based practice decision-making

## Objective(s)

- Learners summarize the dilemma and content presented in Module 5.
- Learners make a recommendation using an evidence-based practice decision-making process.

## Description

In this activity, learners are introduced to an evidence-based practice decision-making framework they can use to make a recommendation about use of AT for Sophie.

## Required Materials/Resources

### Learner Materials

- [Handout 5.3: Research Summary on Assistive Technology Interventions](#)
- Format for learner responses (written activity form, guidance for discussion)

## Detailed Facilitator Instructions

1. Provide access to the evidence-based practice decision-making tool.
2. Ask learners to complete the tasks below:
  - 1) Summarize Step 3. Evidence
    - a. List the major points from Handout 5.3 to summarize the best available research on AT interventions.
    - b. List the major points from Step 3. [C: Policies](#) reflecting the field's views on AT interventions.
    - c. List the major points noted by family members and practitioners on AT interventions from Step 3: [D: Experience-Based Knowledge](#).
  - 2) Consider the context
    - a. Summarize your answers from [Activity 5.10a: Consider the unique contexts](#).
  - 3) Integrate the evidence and context to make a decision
    - a. Recall the answerable question: *For young children who have language and physical delays or impairments (P), are AT interventions (I) effective in promoting learning in the areas of language, mobility, and social development (O)?*
    - b. Weigh the evidence in light of the context to come to a decision. What is your recommendation? Be prepared to discuss.
3. Provide Feedback.

## Suggested Assessment

1. Summarize the general evidence including:

This activity is part of Module 5: Assistive Technology Interventions. To view the content related to this activity, go to [Step 4: Decision](#).

**Instructional Method**  
Structured Exercise

**Level**  
Intermediate

**Estimated Time Needed**  
5 minutes for instructor preparation

15-20 minutes for learner activity

**Learner Form**  
[Activity 5.11a](#)

Research – Research on AT has shown that AT interventions are effective and likely to promote positive outcomes for children across multiple domains.

- a. Policies – Federal law requires that certain services are mandated to allow the child to have access to and participate in everyday activities as independently as possible. Other services required by law include an evaluation, acquiring necessary devices, coordinating and using necessary therapies, and training and technical assistance for everyone involved in the child’s life.
- b. Experience-Based Knowledge – Family members and practitioners recommend considering child preferences, and family priorities in AT interventions, and recommend that practitioners not be afraid to try things, and to ask questions, and to always consider how the child’s home environment plays a role, including their home language.

2. Consider the unique context

Sophie attends a well-established, licensed family child care program with an experienced family child care provider (Ms. Mary). Ms. Mary wants to help Sophie communicate, is open to the idea of using AT, but has some reservations about how to use communication boards. Sophie enjoys sensory experiences, and Holly (her mother) is committed to helping Sophie communicate with those around her. Karen (Sophie’s speech therapist) thinks communication boards will help Sophie communicate and participate, and recommends using the communication boards in the family child care program as well as at home.

3. Integrate the evidence and context

Though not focused solely on use of communication boards, the research suggested that young children using AT equipment made improvements across multiple domains, including communication. Policies recommend that the child acquire the necessary devices and that everyone involved be provided with the necessary training and technical assistance. Family members and practitioners recommend considering child and family preferences and priorities, the home environment, and trying new things. Helping Sophie communicate is one of Holly’s (Sophie’s mother) priorities, and Karen (the speech therapist) thinks use of AT will help Sophie to communicate and participate. Recommendation: Ms. Mary should support Karen and Holly’s suggestion to use AT interventions with Sophie in the family child care program. Karen, Ms. Mary, and Holly should schedule a time to meet to teach Ms. Mary and to share information about the use of communication boards. Ms. Mary’s home also needs to be considered in the selection and design of AT interventions. Now that she is part of the AT team, Ms. Mary should be included in meetings and other opportunities for communication to help create and modify Sophie’s AT intervention plan.

Hints provided to learner:

1. Summarize the general evidence including:
  - a. Research – see ‘key findings’ and ‘bottom line’ sections on Handout 5.3: Research Summary on Assistive Technology Interventions
  - b. Policies – see Handout 5.4: Policy Advisory – The Law Concerning Assistive Technology Interventions, and your responses to questions in Activity 5.8a: Consider the policy on assistive technology interventions
  - c. Experience-Based Knowledge – see Step 3. D, and your responses to questions in Activity 5.9a: Consider experience-based knowledge
2. Consider the unique context
 

See your responses to questions in Activity 5.10a: Consider the unique contexts

3. Integrate the evidence and context

Using the information above, make a decision about whether Ms. Mary should support Karen and Holly's recommendation to use AT with Sophie.

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**Facilitation Tips**

- Break into groups to discuss and respond.

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**Alternate Version(s)** (refers to different levels of difficulty)

- No alternate versions of this activity.

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**Credits**

The CONNECT Content Team