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Center on Technology and Disability: Free Resources to Support
the Use of Assistive Technology in Young Children with
Disabilities - (Adobe)
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>> Welcome everybody to today's coffee break webinar.
Entitled Center on Technology & Disability, free resources to
support the use of assistive technology, young children with
disabilities. My name is Will and I'm with the National Center
for Hearing Assessment and Management which is sharing this
webinar platform through Adobe Connect with you all today. In a
moment, I'm going to hand over the Mike to Marco from the Office
of Head Start. Today's presentation will take 15 or 20 minutes.
After which, we'll reveal a tech screen through which you'll be
able to ask a question or make a comment to today's presenter
and...and...know also that today's webinar is being recorded.
So that if you have any disruptions, either technologically or
pragmatically, you'll be able to access the information provided
today from the web and you'll get that address for where all of
these webinars are being archived via an e-mail in the next week
or so.

So...with that, I'll turn the mic over to Marco.

>> Thank you. I want to start off by saying thank you for
joining us today. On behalf of the Administration, the Office
of Head Start, we want to say thank you for being here. We also
want to give a big thank you to our presenters who have been
with us over the past several days presenting during this coffee
break webinar series.

This is the final webinar series, the final webinar for the Better Hearing and Speech Month Coffee Break and Webinar series. I'm just extremely grateful to all the work that has going into making this webinar series possible.

Without further adieu, I want to introduce you to Jackie Hess. She'll be presenting the final webinar, titled Center on Technology and Disability.

>> Thank you, Marco. First, let me say that I notice a number of you in the participant list were with us last week, specifically, I remember, a lot of you from the, sorry for the background noise, there, I'm in Washington, D.C. where we have a lot of city noise.

Anyway...last week, I did the Augmentative Alternative Communication webinar. Following today's brief presentation, if you have questions, not just about CTD, but about something from last week that didn't get answered on AAC, or about really, any aspect of assistive technology, I'm happy to take you know, any of those questions.

So...today, we're going to walk through resources that are brought to you for free, paid for by your tax dollars through the Department of Education's Office of Special Programs. The Center on Technology and Disability is in partnership with Pacer Center and American Institute of Research.

We were created by OCEP to focus specifically on assistive and instructional technology. If you have questions at the end about the relationship between those two, assistive and instructional and why OCEP has been putting them together, as one term in all of its recently-funded projects, I'd be happy to answer that.

But...the point of our center is to produce, not only a raft of new resources for families, teachers, anyone involved in formal or informal education, service providers, so, that includes Speech Language Pathologists, occupational therapists, researchers and others. Our goal is to create new resources for users at all levels, introductory, medium, or long experience, as well as to aggregate resources beyond those that we create. There are a lot of good resources out there, we identify them, make sure they're current, they're evidence-based and we pull them together into our library, which I'll show you in just a moment. And then, we also produce activities. We have an active webinar schedule. We have eLearning courses and we also provide targeted technical assistance to some of our audiences. That's the general mandate of Center on Technology and Disability. You're looking at the top of the home screen for

our website. And the -- the red arrows were added. You won't see those on the website. If you can't read it easily, the URL is www.ctdinstitute.org. What we're showing you here is that, the website is organized in three main areas. Our library, our webinar central and our e-learning portal.

In addition, last year, we added landing pages for specific audiences. You can see there, the four main audiences that are identified. State and local leaders, teachers/researchers, families and service providers. At the bottom of the homepage, you'll see another way to get into each of those main areas as well as featured resources, which we update every couple of weeks. And...upcoming events. So, if you just have time to drop in onto the homepage and you want to see what's coming up, we make it very easy.

This is an example of a landing page, because we have a lot of service providers with us today. I chose the service provider portal and again, we have so many hundreds, even thousands of resources, that we wanted to make it easy, particularly for return audience members to see, okay, what are we highlighting this month? Are there -- is there a new webinar? Is there a new featured resource? That's what you'll find on the landing page.

So...you know, we're back on the homepage here now. Moving to the library. This is the landing page for the library. We have a number of search functions on the website and the upper right-hand corner, there's an all site search and you can put in whatever word or term occurs to you.

But...on this landing page, you'll see the arrow marked natural search. That one works particularly well in the library. The library is organized in five areas. Really childhood, education, K12, family and student support, transition and state and local leaders. Under each of the main categories, we have a variety of subcategories. We spend a great deal of time tagging those materials that we either create or find for you so that it's not just like a Google search where you're going to get 12,000 things and you have to go through, you know, a million pages to find what you want. We really tried to think through what would be useful within these categories and to tag them so that your searches are as productive as possible. In the right-hand you know, red circle, I don't know how large you have your screen optimized, but I typed in hearing. This brought up 59, it looks to me, search results, you can see that all the ones on this screen are PDF, but...there would also be webinars and...videos and potentially other formats of materials, if we kept scrolling down. You can

refine your search from here, if you don't want to look at 59, if you don't want to scroll through 59 things. The first, first set of filters is by audience. So...if you decided you only wanted to look at things that were intact for service providers, you'd click on that.

This second type of filter is for resource type. If you felt like "I just feel like looking at videos today." Or I need a PowerPoint presentation for training, maybe there's a PowerPoint here, from which I can take things. And by the way, all of our materials are available to you at no cost. We, of course, appreciate attribution, but do feel free, if you find something we've created on the website, one of our PowerPoints or any other resource, to use it in whatever your own practice or training might be. Another filter is by the source organization and the final filter, that you can't see on the screen is by language. We have a fair number of materials in Spanish and then we have a few materials in other languages.

This shows, just an example of a search that was refined. They wanted to look at relevant websites. So, this pulled up, it looks to me like 29 website-based materials. And here, we refined it by webinars. This is showing you the four CTD webinars that, when we put together this slide, we may have more by now, but we put this together for last year. And we had the four webinars that were tagged as being relevant to hearing.

All right...back on the homepage. We're now going to take a look at webinar central.

Now...everything, let me note that to look at, to access anything in the library, you don't have to have CTD account, you don't have to register in any way, however...if you want to participate in any of the webinars or eLearning modules, we do ask you to register. It's completely free. We tried to make it as easy as possible. Just, whatever information you'd like to give us, we don't use, we don't share your information in any way, but...it does allow us to tell the department, basically, are we growing the audience and how we're using our resources.

This is a landing page for Webinar Central. You'll see on the left-hand side, all the reported webinars that we have. At the moment...we have at least 50. Reported webinars and on the left-hand side, any of the upcoming webinars will be identified and you can again, filter the webinar search, either by search term or by audience.

We...are very pleased to be able to bring to you experts from all around the country. Some of you who are participating today are fully qualified experts who we would love to share

with our audiences, so, please do feel free to get in touch. Either directly or on the CTD mailbox to let us know that you'd like to present a webinar and...we think, you know, our audience can gain a lot by both having live access to the, to the experts at the time and we try to, well...we generally insist that people create a PowerPoint that can be shared. A lot of times people want to share their desktop, particularly if they're demonstrating apps for instance. And...but, we also think they're very useful as archived views. So far, I think we've had something like 70,000 views of archived webinars, so...I'd encourage you to look at those as well.

This page just shows you, hopefully, how easy it is to create a new account. Just asking you to put a username and create your own password.

And then, as I say, you only have to do it once. Any time you log in, if you want to RSVP to a webinar, you're very welcome to do that.

And then, finally, the third portion of the website is the eLearning courses. At the moment, we have six of them. They're the most in-depth modules that we offer. For at least half of them, participants can get continuing education units because...we developed them with that in mind. And the units are issued by the North American Assistive Technology and Rehabilitation Association. This is an example of a couple of those modules. They're self-paced. You dig into them at your leisure. You don't have to complete them if you don't want. But you know, again, you might take a look and find it's just really good professional development. You might find you want to use it with the students. It's there for the taking.

This is an example of the landing page for one of those courses, best practices with mobile technology for young children. And...it identifies the lessons, it tells you a little about the lesson summary and then it will tell you whether you completed or not completed each lesson as you move on.

Okay...so, racing through it, that's a quick introduction to CTD and...we have produced a, an AT key ring. That's a brand new thing for us that we hope will be useful to people, again...whether it's in trainings, preservice trainings or in-service training. If you'd like to have us send you little key rings with about ten photos and on the back of each photo is, is a description of what the particular AT is. So...I guess what I'm saying is if you don't see the resource here, get in touch with us and we'll either point you to it or think about

creating it. We've got another year and a half left on this funding cycle, so we have plenty of time to try to meet your particular needs.

So...now, at this point, if anybody has any questions, as I say, either about CTD or about AAC or AT overall...I'm happy to take them.

>> Thank you, Jackie that. Was excellent. What a broad array of wonderful resources you have there. I revealed a questions field over in the left-hand corner of your screen. If any of you have comment or questions for Jackie, that's where you can enter those.

I also want to point out to you that in the middle of your screen, you'll find a downloadable set of PDFs which are all of the slides from each of these coffee break webinars. The one entitled ASL hearing, et cetera is the slides from today's presentation if you're interest did in downloading those.

So, couple questions that are coming in. Our first question, Jackie, a comment and a question. What a wonderful variety of resources you have available. Do you know who your more active audience of users of these resources are?

>> Yes, we do. I'd say that it's teachers and service providers, first and foremost. Some of the teachers and some of the service providers identify themselves as AT specialists. That's...you know, a somewhat small part of them. I would say those are most active audiences. We try to just do everything for those audiences, we want to make sure that we also have things that are relevant for families and...whether the families are getting them directly from us or whether they're getting them from you and other people who work with families, that's fine with us. You know...as a pass-through. So...we think about serving families in that bifurcated way. Both directly for people and people who work with the families.

>> Great. The next question --

>> I see now, why do we require accounts?

>> I'll go ahead and read the question so everybody knows what you'll be speaking about, Jackie. The next question is, how can those of us who interface with service providers convey information about what you have to offer? Do you have anything you'd like us to pass on to help with dissemination of your resources?

>> Well...very much so. We absolutely would. In addition to passing on a link to the website, on the website, we ask people if they would like to join our Listserv. We do not send out Listserv announcements, you know, several times a week. We send them out only to, you know, to let people know about

upcoming webinars and other new resources that we think you know...are particularly interesting and want to Hyatt so...you cannot be afraid of signing up to hear from us, because...again, we, you won't hear from us all that often. But...if you want to share both URL and let people know they can get on our Listserv, that'd be grade.

>> So, there's a couple questions about your, your website from those who actually have their own websites. The first is, may we post your website from our educational website? Like a direct link over to it?

>> Absolutely, absolutely. CTD builds on the work of family Center on Technology & Disability and...at its height, I think we had links from over 400 organizations through that website. We very much would like organizations to post a link to us and we have links to a lot of other websites. If you go on ours and you don't see a link to an organization that you're involved with and should be linking to them, please, by all means, let us know and we will, you know, on the website, there's a contact us. It's CTD@FHI360.org. But you don't have to remember that. It's on the website. Yes, we very much believe in reciprocal pointing to organizations and we also tweet, so you can also follow us on Twitter.

>> Thank you, the next question, really reveals that not only do people benefit from the actual content of the various resources that you offer, but also looking at your design of your website and its functionality as a model. And so...the next question is, can you help us understand why you require accounts for certain things that you access? This person is saying "I'm not questioning this, but curious for our own purposes how this helps you in case we need to consider this feature as well. Is this a gatekeeping function? Why have this rather than just direct access?"

>> Right, well...it is, um...as you can imagine, we have a lot of reporting requirements to OCEP and they want to make sure, as do most, if not all federal funders, that their investment is being successful. So...when people come to the website, in they don't register and they download something, we do have a sense of how many downloads we'd have. But unless you register, not only does it make it difficult for us to know and report that we are reaching people, but...there has to be a way of registering for the webinars. So that we can send people supportive materials, so that we can send -- I don't think there's any webinar provider who doesn't require some type of signing up when you RSVP to a webinar. So...in this case, rather than have people have to sign up every time there's a webinar, to kind of create an account, you created the account one time, then you log in and you just RSVP. So...there are a

number of reasons for it.

>> Okay, great, that's a great explanation. The next question is, how do we get a key ring?

>> Yes, this is brand new. If you can send CTD an e-mail, through the website or by sending it to CTD@FHI360.org. Just let us know how many you'd like and we'll send them to you.

>> I revealed your e-mail as well as the website address over on the left there. So...if you're looking for more information, you can access it that way. We have one final question. That's a point of clarification. What is the one term that is used by OCEF for AT and IT?

>> That's an interesting question and says a lot about the evolution of technology and the evolution of the field. So, we used to just talk about assistive technology. Years ago, that pretty much meant that you were going to have to look for specialized equipment in a special catalog. You might go to a specialized conference to get information, generally in those days, devices could be very expensive. The training lift was very heavy. Steep learning curve. And...often there was device abandonment because you know, kind of set children apart from their peers. With the advent -- well, the advent -- with the changes in consumer technologies, particularly mobile technologies and particularly tablets and phones, we are seeing emerging of assistive and what we generally would just call it instructional technology, we're calling it that. Because it allows children to have access to the general curriculum in a least-restrictive environment. When we put the technologies together, we're signalling that not only are we talking about those still unique, high-end, tend to be expensive devices, but we're also talking about hundreds of apps that are easily downloadable onto the tablet or the phone, that a child in a general ed class may be able to have with them, particularly in their IEP or that a teacher will choose to use for the whole class.

And...the whole idea is that taking assistive technology out of isolated special education environments, bringing the price down, having it merge with consumer technologies. And that's why the phrase, I hope that was somewhat clear.

>> Thank you, Jackie and...I believe that wraps up our questions for today. Marco, do you have any closing remarks you'd like to make?

>> Just want to say thank you to all the presenters that have helped out with this coffee break webinar series. Thank you, Jackie for today's presentation and for all the people that have participated during this past week and a half.

>> Thank you, so...everybody, we all appreciate your attentiveness to this important topic, which is really

recognizing the importance of communication as a means for connection. Which is the theme and...invite you to wave the flag of the importance of communication in the early lives of children.

As we close out today's webinar, remember that this has been recorded and you'll be getting an e-mail that gives you a link to where these are all archived and if you can stay on for just a moment more, as this closes out, your screen will be replaced by an evaluation question that we hope you will answer for us.

And one final thank you to Anne, our captioner, for today. Thank you for your services. Thank you, everyone and thank you, Marco.

>> Thank you, everybody. Bye.

[Call concluded at 2:29 p.m. ET].

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