



The **NEAT** Center at Oak Hill

New England Assistive Technology
Resource & Education Center



Help them develop their potential...



Oak Hill





programs enrich lives

It all starts at the core of our mission – enhancing independence and quality of life for people with disabilities, including visual impairments, by setting the standard in providing innovative solutions, program excellence, services and advocacy.

The New England Assistive Technology Resource and Education (NEAT) Center at Oak Hill provides people with temporary or permanent disabilities, seniors, families and professionals with access to products, new and used equipment, training and services that enhance the independence and quality of life for people of all ages.

Programs



“We recently purchased a Rifton Gait Trainer and now my six-year-old son, Perion, is moving around the kitchen for the first time and is much more mobile. NEAT was so helpful and I was thrilled to find a company restoring good equipment, helping more people who need these expensive items to be able to find and afford them. I've sent a picture of Perion using his Rifton Gait Trainer. Thank you for helping make this possible.”

Chris Schroder, Ohio

New England Assistive Technology Resource and Education (NEAT) Center at Oak Hill – brings people with temporary or permanent disabilities, seniors, families and professionals together with equipment, services and training to enhance independence at school, home and work. A program of Oak Hill, a recognized leader in disability services, the NEAT Center at Oak Hill provides the following services and resources:

Equipment Restoration Center (ERC) – Knowledgeable staff provide personal consultations to people who need equipment to enhance their quality of life. The NEAT Center at Oak Hill accepts donations of gently used disability equipment, which is repaired, restored and sold to consumers at a savings of 50% to 80% of the original cost. An extensive inventory of medical equipment is available to choose from and try out at the Hartford and Stratford locations. Disability equipment for infants and children up to 3 years old is also available through a partnership with State of Connecticut Department of Developmental Services Birth to Three Program.

Assistive Technology (AT) Consultation and Evaluation Services – Our highly trained and qualified staff work with families and students’ educational teams to provide consultations and evaluations on the most appropriate and cost effective assistive technology.

Training and Professional Development – Educators and other professionals can receive training and technical assistance on a variety of assistive technology devices and adapted software to benefit their students with disabilities while earning recertification and Continuing Education Units.



Programs



“My 88-year-old aunt suffers from macular degeneration. After seeing your video magnifier, we bought it that day. My aunt has been using it to read with daily. Before the magnifier, my aunt was giving up on life. Macular degeneration was robbing her of her one great pleasure, reading. We can't thank you enough for helping us help her rekindle her enthusiasm for life. We were amazed by all of the equipment that is available for the sight-impaired and the host of services that you provide to people with disabilities of all kinds. We look forward to sharing this with others.”

Marilyn Afrotone,
New Hartford

Demonstration Center – Comprised of a Computer Lab, Training and Evaluation Rooms, an Exposition Hall and an Information and Resource Library, the Demonstration Center provides resources and information on today's disability equipment and services. The newest technology is available to try out at expositions, product demonstrations, trainings and workshops.

Membership – The NEAT Center at Oak Hill is free to people with disabilities and their families and to people 65 years and older with physical limitations. Professionals, school districts, non-profits and corporations can become members and receive such benefits as: free and reduced prices on professional development classes; unlimited use of the Lending Library to borrow equipment; reduced rates to rent the NEAT Center at Oak Hill; product placement within the 12,500 square foot facility; and free admission and display space at expositions.





Programs



At a mentoring camp for youth with visual impairments, Lauren was one of seven teenagers who received computer and mobility training, participated in mock job interviews, and spent some relaxing time at Camp Harkness. Lauren, said, "It was the best camp ever! I learned about advocating more for myself and being more independent in the community."

Lauren, camper

Blindness Related Services and Supports – For individuals who have been blind since birth, have visual impairments or for those who are losing their vision, the NEAT Center at Oak Hill is an invaluable resource, offering the following:

- **Equipment and Software** that enable people who have limited or no vision to excel in school, find and keep jobs, and live in their own homes.
- **Blind and Low Vision Evaluation and Training** available for individuals in their own homes or at their work sites and for human resource professionals to help their employees return to work and retain jobs.
- **Job Placement Assistance and Computer Training** that provide adults interested in meaningful employment with computer training, information on current job opportunities and transportation options, and assistance with interview skills.
- **Summer Camp for Youth with Low Vision and Blindness** that enables teens to attend a week-long residential program with training in orientation and mobility, assistive technology, computer and Internet use as well as information on pursuing a degree in higher education and career opportunities. This program is a collaboration with the state Board of Education and Services for the Blind (BESB).
- **Vision Open Houses** are offered several times each year showcasing the latest technology to improve life for people who are blind or have low vision through product demonstrations and consultations, vendor displays, and featured experts in the field of low vision and blindness.





Programs

Certified Aging In Place Specialists (CAP) – highly trained staff provide CAP evaluations and recommendations which enable people who are elderly to improve everyday skills, build independence and provide them with the opportunity to safely remain in their homes.

Professional Development – training, product demonstrations, and a speaker series are available year round in the field of assistive technology services, programs and products, with opportunities for Continuing Education Units.

Scholarships – The Legacy Fund provides funding for people who are legally blind. For more information or for an application, please contact the development and communications department at (860) 242-2274 or email info@ciboakhill.org

Rental Information – The NEAT Center at Oak Hill is a fully-accessible facility with 12,500 square feet of flexible space to accommodate a wide variety of events (meetings, training sessions, focus groups, beta testing, conferences and other gatherings).

The Really NEAT Store – Available at the Hartford location, the retail store provides adaptive devices such as magnifiers, toys and canes.



Cynthia Crosby and her son Isaiah came to an expo at the NEAT Center at Oak Hill to look at bicycles. Cynthia told us, “We were told more than a few times that four-year-old Isaiah would never be able to ride a bike, as a means of laying the ground for ‘don’t expect too much.’ But ride a bike he did. Isaiah was in his element. You could see the look of joy on his face when he first took off on the bike and the expression on his mother’s face that said, “I knew he could do it!” Cynthia says, “This was a very special day for us. We were very excited to provide him with this opportunity today in such a spontaneous way. Thanks so much!”





“We were able to purchase a Pony Walker for a kindergarten student. It was just like new and delivered to us. Our student immediately stood in the Pony Walker and took several steps. We thank you.”

Linda Tomaszewski,
Physical Therapist,
Coventry Public Schools

Meeting the changing needs of people with disabilities

In 1997, Oak Hill conducted a study to determine what needs were not being met for people with disabilities in Connecticut. The overwhelming response was access to assistive technology – how to find it, try it out and purchase it at the most cost-effective price. A pilot program was designed in 1999 to determine the feasibility of the program. Over the next three years, over 6,000 people with disabilities, their families and the professionals who work with them let us know we were most definitely meeting a need.

In 2000, a capital campaign was launched to raise 4 million dollars for the renovation of the former Oak Hill swimming pool and recreation building. Thanks to extraordinary support from individuals, foundations, corporations, civic organizations and the State of Connecticut, the campaign was a success.

In 2002, the renovation was complete, the capital campaign was concluded, a grand opening was held, and the building was named in honor of Lars Guldager, former executive director of Oak Hill.

In 2003, Aetna became the first Corporate Sponsor.

In 2005, the NEAT Center at Oak Hill hosted the first national conference for assistive technology, signed a contract with the Department of Developmental Services’ Birth to Three Program, became a Microsoft Accessibility Resource Center, and contracted with the Connecticut Tech Act Project to establish a satellite Equipment Restoration Center located in Fairfield County.

In 2006, the NEAT Center at Oak Hill presented at the National Assistive Technology Conference, began offering assistive technology evaluations, collaborated with The Board of Education and Services for the Blind to offer a camp for blind youth, partnered with Georgia Institute of Technology on a national grant and became a member of the national Assistive Technology advisory board.





"I learned new stuff on the computer, programs called JAWS, PacMate and WindowEyes and I'd love to come back! Thanks to the NEAT Center at Oak Hill for this camp."

Hector, Camper

In 2007, The NEAT Marketplace was renamed the NEAT Center at Oak Hill; was featured on CPTV's Emmy Award-winning series, Able Lives, focusing on how Connecticut residents live with disabilities; collaborated with the Disability Resource Center of Fairfield County and opened the Stratford satellite Equipment Restoration Center; and expanded its services for the Birth to Three Program.

The NEAT Center at Oak Hill is the only Microsoft Accessibility Resource Center in Connecticut, offering free instructional materials and classes to the public to learn about the accessibility options already built into personal computers.

Locations:

The NEAT Center at Oak Hill currently has two locations but has plans to expand throughout the state and the northeast.

- **Hartford** – located at 120 Holcomb Street (at the corners of Holcomb and Coventry Streets)
- **Stratford** – located at 80 Ferry Boulevard (a partner with the Disability Resource Center of Fairfield County)

Hours:

Hartford: 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday (excluding state and federal holidays). Open the first Saturday of each month. For more information or to arrange a personal consultation, call toll free (866) 526-4492, in Hartford (860) 243-2869 or TDD (860) 286-3113.

Stratford: 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday (excluding state and federal holidays). Please call ahead to make appointments at (203) 378-6977 or TDD (203) 378-3248.

Visit our website for more information: www.neatmarketplace.org



Ways to Give or Help



“I had been looking for an inexpensive manual wheelchair for Emma who has spinal muscular atrophy. We found one at the NEAT Center at Oak Hill for \$80 and it retails for \$2,500. This chair gives Emma a tremendous amount of independence. The NEAT Center is great and the people are fantastic.”

Johnathon, Emma's father, Bristol, CT

Be a Volunteer. Oak Hill welcomes volunteers who want to touch the lives of people with disabilities. Volunteer opportunities include working directly with program participants in a classroom, residential group home, or community activity as well as assisting with gardening, building projects, administrative tasks, or events. The NEAT Center at Oak Hill welcomes volunteers to help restore used equipment, answer phones, and help at expositions.

Be a Donor. Gifts from individuals, corporations, foundations and civic organizations have a tremendous impact on the quality of life for the people with disabilities served by Oak Hill.

Annual Donations. Your gift can be unrestricted and used for programs that have the most urgent need or restricted to a specific program such as the NEAT Center at Oak Hill.

Planned Gifts. Through the **Oak Hill Foundation**, you can establish an endowed fund, a charitable gift annuity, include a bequest to Oak Hill in your will, or take advantage of many planned giving options that can provide you or your family members with income while ensuring that Oak Hill continues to meet the changing and diverse needs of people with disabilities.

Donate durable medical equipment. When a child outgrows equipment, a loved one who used equipment passes away, or an individual no longer needs equipment, families are often at a loss about what to do. The NEAT Center at Oak Hill gratefully accepts donations of used equipment that is refurbished and sold at a significantly reduced rate to people in need. Just give us a call and we will pick up the equipment at your convenience.

Become a member. For professionals and organizations who work with people who have disabilities, a membership at the NEAT Center at Oak Hill includes invaluable benefits that will enhance the lives of the people you serve. For corporations and vendors, a membership provides exposure to thousands of potential customers in need of your services and products.



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Contact Us:

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Oak Hill

programs and centers

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and click on Ways to Give

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