

Transcript — 5 myths about assistive technology

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[0:00] Introduction

[Title slide: 5 myths about assistive technology]

[Description: A bald person with glasses, wearing a white button-down shirt and a black-and-blue striped tie, sits in a spacious office.]

[On-screen text: Jamie Martin, Assistive Technology Consultant]

Jamie: There are a lot of myths about assistive technologies. And when we're talking about assistive technology, we're talking about things like dictation or text-to-speech or audiobooks.

[0:18] Myth #1: Using assistive technology is cheating

The most prevalent one — one I see a lot — is that somehow, using assistive technology is cheating. Which is really kind of silly when you think about it because kids who need to wear glasses, you wouldn't accuse them of cheating.

I think it really comes down to trying to get people used to the idea that assistive technology is a tool that kids need to be successful in school and reach their academic potential.

[0:49] Myth #2: Assistive technology lowers motivation

Another myth that I see a lot is that when kids use assistive technology, they're somehow going to become overreliant on it. Or they're not going to be motivated to, you know, give their best effort in school.

In reality, when kids are able to use assistive technology, they can become more motivated because they have tools that allow them to be successful. And then they're able to give their best effort because they get a taste of success.

[1:25] Myth #3: Listening to audiobooks makes it harder to learn how to read

Many parents are concerned if they let their children listen to audiobooks, it's somehow going to make it more difficult for them to learn how to read. But nothing can be further from the truth.

In fact, many experts will tell you that listening to audiobooks can actually help kids become better readers. If your child can read the text and listen to it at the same time, that's even better, because that makes it a multisensory reading experience.

[1:57] Myth #4: Kids can learn assistive technology on their own

Sometimes I see people think that kids who are digital natives can somehow teach themselves how to use assistive technology.

Just because a child is a digital native and they're born in a time where everybody has a smartphone or a tablet, yes, they can text message, they can watch YouTube videos, they can do internet searches. But they're not teachers. They don't understand, you know, what they need to learn and how some of these tools can be used to learn things in the most effective way.

So, there will always need to be the support and the training for the kids who are using it in order for them to use it in the most effective ways for their schoolwork.

[2:48] Myth #5: Assistive technology gives an unfair advantage

Another myth that I see is that when kids use assistive technology, they're going to have an unfair advantage over kids in the class who aren't using it.

The way to think about that is that all kids can use assistive technology, like dictation or audiobooks or text-to-speech. So all kids in a classroom can certainly be using the same assistive technology tools and they can all benefit from it in some way.

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