



Iowa's information and referral service on disability services, assistive technology (AT), AT funding resources, and AT legal advocacy.

Disability Information & Referral
Connecting People to Programs

A PROGRAM OF THE CENTER FOR DISABILITIES AND DEVELOPMENT

Iowa COMPASS News

Happy Holidays from Iowa COMPASS and the Iowa Program for Assistive Technology

Are you trying to think of a great gift for family and friends this holiday season? Have you ever considered devices to help your family or friends be more independent and safe! There are devices out there that will help you fish, knit, dial the phone, garden, or even read that new Dan Brown book.

For example, you may have a friend who could use a **Shower bench and hand held shower**. Bathrooms remain the number one place where falls happen in the home. A shower *bench* allows a person to sit down on the bench outside the bathtub and then slide over the bathtub rim as they lift their feet. That means no balancing while they stand and lift their feet over the bathtub rim. It is also safer for the caregiver who is helping them into the tub. Shower benches are available at your local medical supply store (DME) and hand held showers are available at many home building supply and discount stores.



Transition mats are recycled rubber mats that reduce the bump in the sill of a sliding door. This makes walking through a sliding door much easier if you use a walker or a wheelchair. There are also transition mats for doors to the outside outside, and ramps that help make a flat landing area. Check them out at www.safepathproducts.com.

Speech-to-text software helps you talk into a computer instead of typing. If you problems typing, the software can help you connect to family and friends through the internet. The software program *Dragon Naturally Speaking* is available in many office supply stores that sell computers. Or you can check out the Iowa dealer at <http://www.wahltek.com/store/catalog/voice-recognition/software/dragon-naturally-speaking>.

New kitchen, garden and workshop tools with built up larger handles can replace older tools. The new ones make it easier to hold on to and do the things you want to do around the house. Most stores have these available now to replace older tools. The brand OXO is one

such company who makes such tools.

Maybe your family and friends just need some work done around the house. As their gift, consider installing:

Grab bars in the bathroom

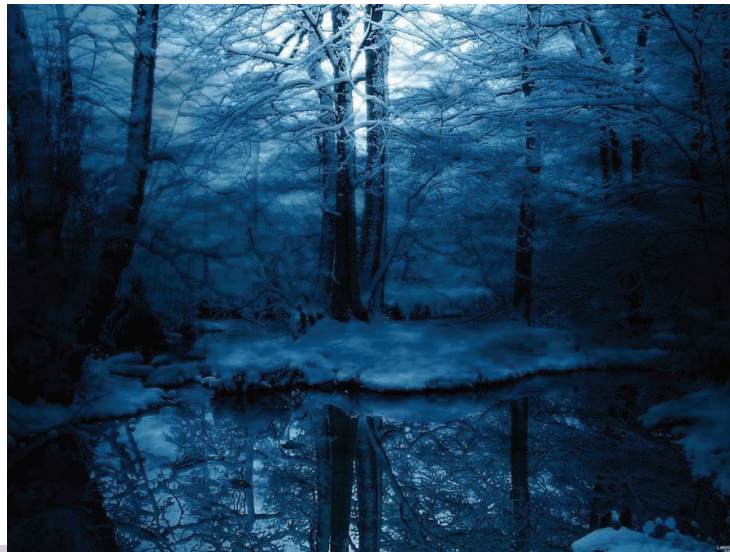
Automatic light fixtures

Hand held showers

Lever handles on doors

If you have children on your shopping list, you might want to go to the [Toys R Us Toy Guide for Differently-Abled Kids](#) to get ideas, click on the link. You can also read a great article at www.eparent.com/ about the Exceptional Parent magazine 2009 Toy Review.

If you need other ideas about what assistive technology or devices are available to help a family member do a specific task, you can **call Iowa COMPASS at 800-779-2001.**



The COMPASS newsletter is online at www.iowacompass.org/

Iowa COMPASS News is published bimonthly through the Iowa Program for Assistive Technology. **Iowa COMPASS** is a project of the Center for Disabilities and Development, Iowa's University Center for Excellence on Disabilities. CDD is a component of the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics, University of Iowa Health Care. No endorsement of products or services is intended.

Phone: 800-779-2001

Fax: 319-384-5139

Email: compassnewsletter@uiowa.edu

Support for Iowa COMPASS is provided by:

Center for Disabilities and Development
Iowa Program for Assistive Technology
Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services
Iowa Department of Human Services
Governor's Developmental Disabilities Council