Embracing Universal Design & Assistive Technology to Support Learning & Achievement of Young Children

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Dichotomous Definitions?

• **(Assistive) Technology** - *devices and equipment we need or use to be functional in the environment*

• **Universal Design** - "*The design of products and environments with a goal that they are usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design.*** (Center for Universal Design, North Carolina State University).
Supporting Learning & Achievement of Young Children
Focus on Young Children

**UD**
- Environments
- Play Grounds
- Play Equipment
- Caregiver Assists
- **Teaching & Learning**
  - Early Literacy
  - Preparation for School Success
  - Assessment.

**AT**
- Environmental Interactions
- Recreation
- Toy Activation
- Positioning
- Existence (eating, etc.)
- Travel and Mobility
- Education and Transition
- Communication.
Assistive Technology

For people without disabilities, *technology makes things easier*.

For people with disabilities, *technology makes things possible*. 
Assistive Technology -

- Existence (eating, etc.)
- Communication
- Positioning
- Travel and Mobility
- Environmental Interactions
- Education and Transition
- Recreation

Blackhurst & Lahm, 2000
AT Availability

Readily ------------------------------------------Low
(General) (Targeted)
General market Small markets
Universal Design

assumes the idea,
that everybody has a disability

Ronald L. Mace
Universal Design -

- Environments
- Play Grounds
- Play Equipment
- Toys/Play as Learning
- Caregiver Assists
  - Teaching & Learning
  - Early Literacy
  - Preparation for School Success
  - Assessment
Environments

White Hutchinson Leisure & Learning Group
4050 Broadway, Suite 215
Kansas City, Missouri 64111, USA
Play Grounds

MIG Headquarters:
800 Hearst Avenue
Berkeley, CA 94710
Play Equipment

Boundless Playgrounds
Bloomfield, CT
Toys

Corinna E. Lathan, founder of AnthroTronix Inc.
Caregiver Assist

“Definitions Blend and Move”

The technology is the same, only the application is different.
Assumption that if the application is more difficult then it should cost more.

Ron Mace, FAIA
How can we make Heads or Tails of this?

? How can we look at both sides of the coin simultaneously

? Can we see them as independent

? Under what conditions/situations does AT need to be used because the UD product “window” of design is not big enough?
Universally designed settings/conditions for young children

Expand opportunities for learning and participation using AT
The Moral of the Story is...