

A Guide to Adapted Toys in Kentucky

What does an "adapted" toy mean? In order to provide access by a child with a disability, most battery-operated toys can be adapted to use a variety of switches. The type of switch and length of wire is determined by the ability of the child who operates it.

Through the use of adaptive toys, more children with disabilities are being provided the same play opportunities available to children without disabilities. The benefits of play to young children and infants in all stages of development are numerous. They learn to interact with and manipulate their environment, learn cause-and-effect relationships, develop positive feelings about themselves, and develop gross and fine motor skills. Playing with toys can be a strong motivation for all children and can be used to positively reinforce many desired behaviors.

Lending Libraries

The KATS Network provides a network of lending libraries across the state. They are: enTECH in Louisville, Western Kentucky Assistive Technology Toy Library in Owensboro, Redwood Assistive Technology Center Toy Library in Ft. Mitchell, and Carl D. Perkins Vocational Training Center in Thelma. The centers will loan toys to children or youths with disabilities, their parents, teachers or therapist. They will loan to any eligible person in their service area and in special cases statewide.

These AT Resource Centers (ATRCs) are a part of Kentucky's online lending library and exchange site for Assistive Technology. This is a free online service to find equipment available for loan, sale, demonstration, or giveaway. The available toys for loan can be viewed here. So logon and register at www.katsnet.at4all.com.

Carl D. Perkins Vocational Training Center (CDPVTC) – Thelma

The CDPVTC Toy Library began in 2015 with funding from the KATS Network. A variety of adapted toys are available and can be borrowed for a complimentary 30-day trial.

What is Available

A variety of switch adapted toys and switches.

Where to Go

CDPVTC is located at 5659 Main Street, Thelma, KY 41260. For more information, contact (606) 788-7080 or visit the website at <http://cdpvtc.ky.gov/> or view their toys at katsnet.at4all.com

The Enabling Technologies of Kentuckiana (enTECH) – Louisville

The enTECH Toy Library is funded from First Steps, WHAS and other grants. Eligible patrons can borrow up to four adaptive toys for a period of four weeks. The only charges are for late returns and damaged toys and they may be waived if there are extenuating circumstances.

What is Available

A variety of special switches, switch-adapted toys, and instructional toys are available. In addition, several books about adaptive toys are available for loan.

Where to Go

enTECH is located in Spalding University, 901 South Third Street, Louisville, KY 40203. For more information, contact either (502) 992-2448 or (800) 896-8941, ext. 2648 or visit the website at spalding.edu/academics/entech or view their toys at katsnet.at4all.com.

Western Kentucky Assistive Technology Center (WKATC) – Owensboro

The WKATC Toy Library began in 1994 with funding from First Steps and the KATS Network. A variety of adapted toys are available and can be borrowed for a complimentary 2-week trial. If the item is needed for an extended period, there is a monthly rental based on the value of the equipment.

What is Available

A variety of switch adapted toys and switches.

Where To Go

WKATC is located at 815 Triplett Street, Owensboro, KY 42302. For more information, contact either (270) 689-1738 or (800) 209-6202 or visit the website at wkatc.org or view their toys at katsnet.at4all.com

Redwood Assistive Technology Center (REDWOOD) – Ft. Mitchell

The Redwood Toy Library was started in 1997 from parents' donations, funds from the KATS Network, Cincinnati Association for the Blind and other organizations. Toys are loaned for a month and charges based on toy value are as follows: under \$ 500 = \$10; from \$500 to \$1,000 = \$ 25.00; and from \$1,000 to \$ 3,000 = \$35.

What is Available

A variety of special switches, switch-adapted toys, and instructional toys are available. Augmentative Communication devices and materials for education are also part of the inventory.

Where to Go

Redwood is located at 71 Orphanage Road; Ft. Mitchell, KY 41017. For more information, contact either (859) 331-0880 or (800) 728-9807 or visit their website at redwoodnky.org or view their toys at katsnet.at4all.com.

Adapting off-the-shelf Toys

Many off-the-shelf toys can be easily and economically adapted to switch-control. There are a variety of switches available from the vendors listed below or an electronics store. Some examples are a joystick, large pads, single-switch, sip-and-puff, grip, etc. Although switch-making kits are available, another option is getting someone else to adapt a toy for you. There are several people in the state with experience in adapting toys and other devices. If you have a toy that you would like to have adapted for switch control, please contact any of the centers above and they will be able to help you.

Below is a partial list of vendors who manufacture specially adapted toys as well as information on other adaptive toy resources.

AbleNet	800-322-0956	ablenetinc.com
Enabling Devices	800-832-8697	enablingdevices.com
Flaghouse Inc. Giant Leap Catalog	800-793-7900	flaghouse.com
Toys R Us Toy Guide for Differently Abled Kids	800-869-7787	toysrus.com

For more information contact the KATS Network (800) 327-5287 – katsnet.org