

# Communicating on the QIAT List

## Welcome, Assumptions and Guidelines for Participation

Welcome to the QIAT List:

The QIAT Community is dedicated to the provision of quality assistive technology services in schools and other settings. The QIAT List is a forum dedicated to promoting collaboration, best practice, and a respect for inquiry among its participants. Participation in the QIAT List is open to persons from any perspective, including service providers, consumers, family members, advocates, vendors, university professors, students, and others who share an interest in high quality assistive technology service provision and ideas.

QIAT List Assumptions:

Starting in 1999, the QIAT List has provided a forum for people from around the United States and the world to share information, experiences and thoughts about AT in a safe, respectful environment. Much of the longevity and popularity of the QIAT List relates to the three major assumptions that form the basis of QIAT Conversations:

- 1) All communication is phrased in a way that demonstrates respect, trust, and sincere appreciation for the differing viewpoints, backgrounds, and interests of each person in the QIAT Community.
- 2) All differences of opinion are seen as opportunities to grow in understanding and clarity and to invite the growth of others.
- 3) All persons in the QIAT Community are committed to the understanding that the QIAT List is not to be used for marketing purposes.

QIAT List Participation Guidelines:

There are well over 5,000 people on the QIAT List and every message sent through the list goes to *everyone*. When communicating through the QIAT List, all participants are expected to adhere to the assumptions and respect the time and perspectives of others on the list by following these guidelines.

Audience:

- Write for general consumption
  - Messages go “to the world” and are **not** private

- QIAT is open to anyone interested in joining
- Respect the diversity of the community and the individual participants
- Use “people first” language (e.g., students with autism, not the autistics) unless you are referring to yourself or your own child.
- Avoid statements that judge or criticize other groups, individuals, or entities
- Respect the time and available resources of individual participants
  - Avoid sending personal messages meant for one person through the QIAT List.
  - Messages that only say, “Thank you.” or “I want one” are to be sent directly to the person who initiated the email.
  - Any training opportunity – paid or free - can be shared in ONE initial post in advance of the training date and ONE reminder anytime in the week the training takes place.
- List members are encouraged to share resources and supports that they have developed which could be of interest to others. To submit a document to the Resource Bank, from the QIAT site (<https://qiat.org> ), under the Resources tab, choose Submit a Document and complete the form there. You will receive a message from the list manager when your document has been posted.
- Note that the footer on the bottom of every message provides instructions on how to leave the QIAT List. To view and manage message delivery options, go to <https://qiat.org/qiat-list>.

### Messages to the QIAT List:

- Make each message clear and brief but include sufficient detail for others to understand the questions or comments,
- Reflect the content of the message in the subject line as clearly and briefly as possible.
- When using acronyms, use the whole phrase with the acronyms the first time so that all will understand. For example:
  - Individualized Educational Program (IEP)
  - National Assistive Technology in Education Network (NATE)
- Respect limitations on sharing copyrighted materials. Not everything on the Internet can be freely distributed.
- When asking questions about AT devices, make sure the question gives list members enough information to offer a helpful response. Answers to very general questions such as “What can augmentative communication devices be used for?” can often be found through an internet search. Some questions about features of specific products can be researched by visiting the vendor’s website.
- Questions to the QIAT List about AT device use for specific individuals are clear and can best be answered when they provide the following information:
  - What is the task the person needs to do?
  - What is the person’s present level of performance on that task?
  - Where does this task need to be done? School? Home? In the community?
  - What has been tried already?

- Are there items that people on the team want to try or feel might be very useful?

## Products:

- Avoid making judgments that indicate one product is “better” than another. It is not acceptable to say, “Product A is *better* than Product B.” Comparisons of features are encouraged. For example, “Product A has these features. Product B has these features. From my experience, features X and Y best met the needs for the individual and setting.”
- When discussing a specific product, emphasize the features you found useful and under what conditions. If you have found specific challenges in using the product, describe them.
- Vendor participation
  - Marketing of products on the QIAT List is prohibited.
  - One promotional announcement of a new product can be made through the QIAT List. Please avoid making successive announcements about products that are essentially equivalent.
  - Vendors may respond with clarifying information when their product is being discussed.
  - Vendors are urged to contribute to other QIAT conversations without “selling their products.”
  - Any training opportunity – paid or free – can be shared in ONE initial post in advance of the training date and ONE reminder anytime in the week the training takes place.

Your awareness and commitment to use of these guidelines will help ensure a positive experience for all in the QIAT Community. Reminders from the list managers will be sent when needed. If multiple reminders are required, a participant may be asked to leave the list or may be unsubscribed by the QIAT Leadership Team.

## The Quality Indicators Assistive Technology Leadership Team:

You can reach the members of the QIAT Leadership Team through email at [qiatleadership@gmail.com](mailto:qiatleadership@gmail.com)