

**The Post Rock Connection**  
**Post Rock Extension District #1 Family and Consumer Sciences Column**  
**Month of June 2024**  
**By Brenda Langdon, Family Resource Management Agent**

**Assistive Devices Enhancing Independence and Quality of Life at Any Age**

The term assistive technology encompasses a wide range of tools and devices designed to make everyday tasks easier. From simple aids like canes and glasses to prosthetics, wheelchairs, stair lifts, automated pill dispensers and more, assistive devices play a vital role in promoting independence and improving quality of life for people of all ages.

As we age, certain tasks may become more challenging, however, with the right assistive devices individuals can continue to navigate their daily routines with confidence and ease.

There are many things available that can make our lives easier. For example, just using a step stool is an easier and safer way to reach the upper shelf. A lever handle to replace a traditional doorknob is another low-cost option that can be an excellent use of assistive technology. When you have arthritis, a traditional rounded doorknob can be a lot more difficult to grasp in order to turn the knob in a comfortable way. A lever handle is a horizontal bar that you can press down easily without having to focus on a more circular, tougher grip.

**In the kitchen** — Grip foam handles for silverware, cutting boards that hold food in place, and drinking straw holders assist individuals with dexterity issues or weakness in their hands. These devices enable to better prepare food and enjoy meals with greater ease and comfort .

**Around the house** — Programmable thermostats, robot vacuums, grab bars and handrails.

**Dressing and bathing** — Buttoning aids and zipper pulls, long shoehorns, and one-handed belts.

**Communication** — Pens and pencils with special grips, talk-to-text devices, and electronic screen readers help individuals with visual or motor impairments communicate effectively and access information independently. These tools help for participation in social interactions.

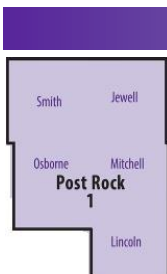
**Cognition and memory** — Audiobooks, identification bracelets, and note-taking systems enhance cognitive function and promote independence in daily life.

**Workplace and Leisure** — Ergonomic workstations, anti-fatigue mats, and swivel seating promote comfort and productivity in the workplace. They also enable individuals to engage in leisure activities and hobbies, maintaining quality of life.

It's essential to consult with healthcare professionals and explore available resources to find the right solutions for individual needs. Primary care physicians, physical therapist and occupational therapist can provide guidance in selecting appropriate devices and accessing financial assistance through insurance providers.

Ultimately, the goal of assistive technology is to enable individuals to age in place safely and comfortably, maintaining independence, mobility, and emotional wellbeing.

*The Post Rock District of K-State Research and Extension serves Jewell, Lincoln, Mitchell, Osborne, and Smith Counties. Contact Brenda at [bklangdon@ksu.edu](mailto:bklangdon@ksu.edu) or by calling 785-346-2521. Stay connected with "Post Rock Extension" on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube. Our website is [www.postrock.ksu.edu](http://www.postrock.ksu.edu).*



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