



## Smart Home Pilot Update

*A different kind of  
natural support*

Penn-Mar has expanded the use of Alexa, the virtual voice assistant, from three homes to nine. Upon surveying the homes, the most used Alexa features are:

1. Alexa reminders to keep track of medication times, trash day, laundry, and daily schedules.
2. Alexa routines to automate indoor and outdoor lights to save electricity and turn on a galaxy projector to create a stimulating atmosphere in one's room.
3. Cooking with Alexa Show to make meal preparation easier and more interactive than just following a recipe from a cookbook or website.

The use of Alexa reminders, routines, and the Alexa Show for cooking have proven to be particularly beneficial, and it is exciting to see how technology can make a positive impact with the people we support.

## Assistive Technology Spotlight

Julia, with the support of her team, has been exploring the benefits of using a tablet to increase her communication skills and independence. The team began the process by meeting with Julia's family, who suggested using a tablet they already had. Support staff Dawn researched two communication apps - JABTalk and SymboTalk - and chose SymboTalk, as it was easy to develop the communication pages tailored to Julia's needs and interests. Dawn began by selecting things that Julia would be familiar with, such as "bathroom". Although Julia is still learning to use the tablet and requires assistance with turning it on, tapping the screen or navigating to her desired music on YouTube, the team is hopeful that with continued encouragement, she will use the device to express her emotions, something she struggles with verbally.



# Welcome to Penn-Mar's Assistive Technology Loaner Library!



Penn-Mar's Assistive Technology Library, funded by an ODP Assistive Technology grant, gives Penn-Mar's team members access to borrow available technology solutions for trial with people in the community, at home, and in a workplace setting.

See, Try, and Borrow AT!

Equipment can be signed out up to 4 weeks at a time.

Hours: Tuesdays 12pm - 3pm & Thursdays 9am - 11:30am

Location: Penn-Mar North (Far Hills) | 888 Far Hills Drive, New Freedom, PA 17349

## *Assistive Technology in Action*

The use of low-tech gadgets is not only beneficial to people with disabilities but also to their support staff and family members who may struggle to assist them with daily activities. By utilizing these gadgets, people with disabilities can maintain their independence.

Watch these low-tech gadgets in action:



**Video 1**



**Video 2**

## *Questions?*

*Questions about the lending library or assistive technology?*

*Contact:*

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