Get Set for Middle School:
A guide to Preparing Students for Middle School from an Occupational Therapy Perspective

4. Using Technology as a Tool for Success

Basic Keyboarding skills

In order to successfully utilize Assistive technology, the student must have a basic ability to interface with the device. Correct finger placement on the home row is critical and is a skill that is taught to most 6th graders in their Keyboarding skills class. Practice at home can help to increase proficiency, speed and accuracy typing both written copy and dictated content. On line sites:

www.learninggamesforkids.com/keyboarding_games.html

www.freetypinggame.net/

Some computers are equipped with voice recognition features that are helpful for search activities but will not replace the need for keyboarding skills.

Tips:

If you use a laptop for your schoolwork save your work to the school server or a flash drive periodically. This ensures that your work is not lost if the computer is damaged or lost.

Get familiar with the basic functionality needed to effectively utilize Word, Excel, and Google Word software. These programs are used universally in academic and business environments.

Print only the work that is required to be handed in as a hard copy. Most teachers will be able to access your work from the school server or will accept it as an attachment to an email. This saves both time and paper.

Learn about ways for students to 'search' beyond Google, Yahoo and' ASK'. Googling a subject can produce very narrow results unless advanced search options are used and can be very tedious for students. Learn how to use visual search engines, custom Google search, and Wonderwheel

Remember: Assistive technology including laptops, IPads and IPods etc. present a wealth of opportunities to enhance learning opportunities but can also for the strategy to avoid work: low battery; lost wi-fi signal; 'lost' files etc. Check in regularly with your student to assure assignments are up to date and on track for completion by due date.

Links:

https://conval.edu/schools/sms/parents/technology-tips-for-parents/technology-tips-for-parents