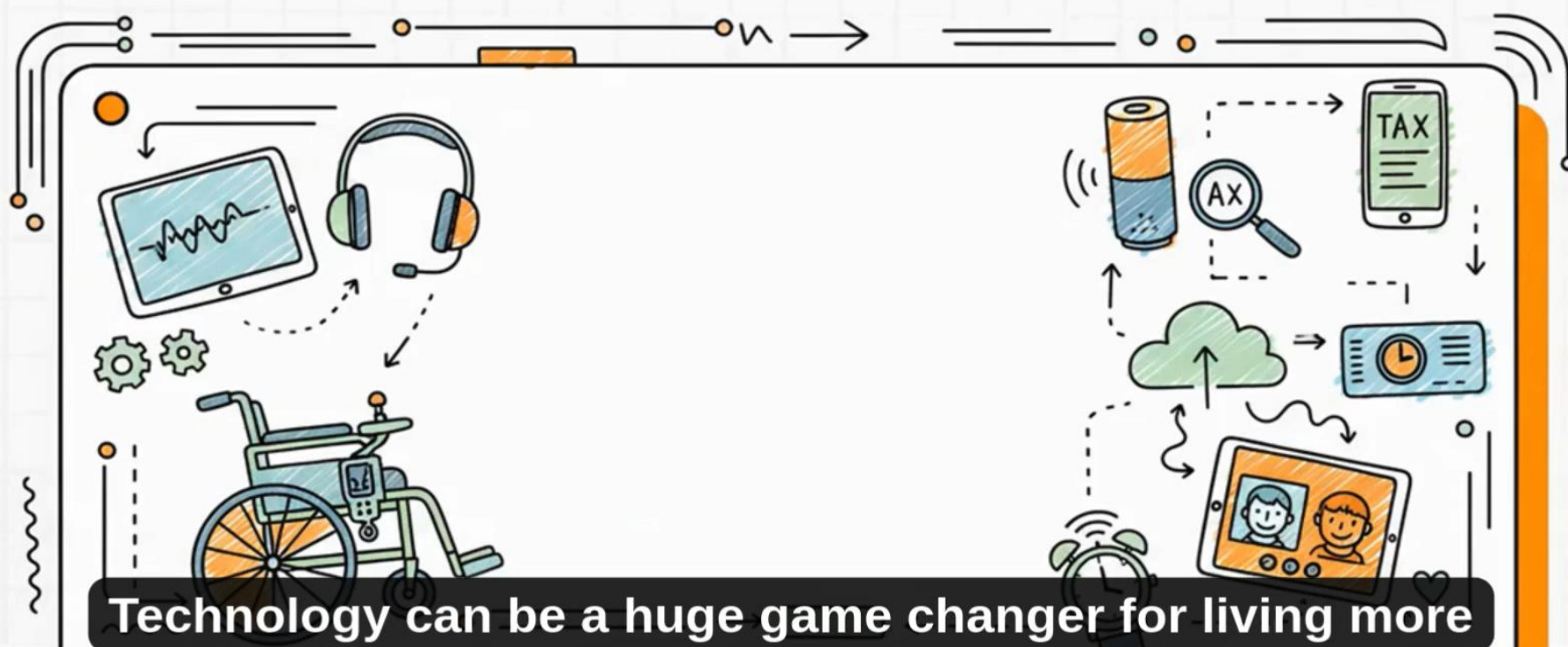
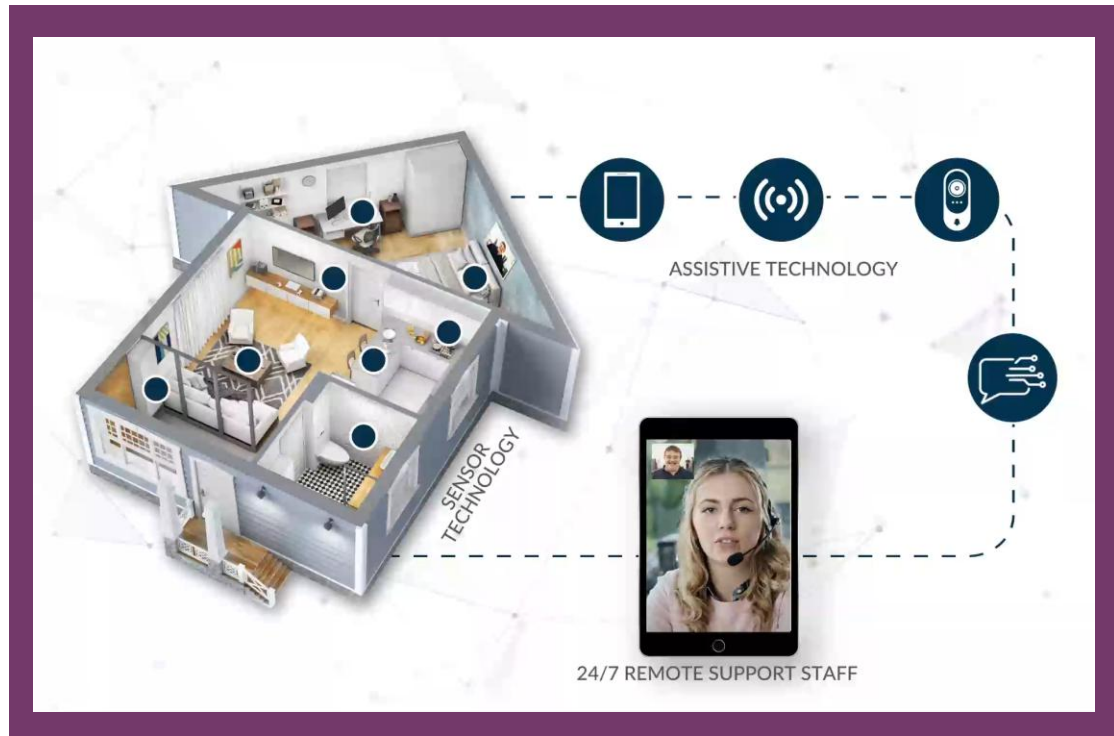


Tech Toolkit: AT, ET, RS



Technology can be a huge game changer for living more

DDS Provider & Community Stakeholder Remote Supports Presentation



January 23, 2026

What is Technology First?

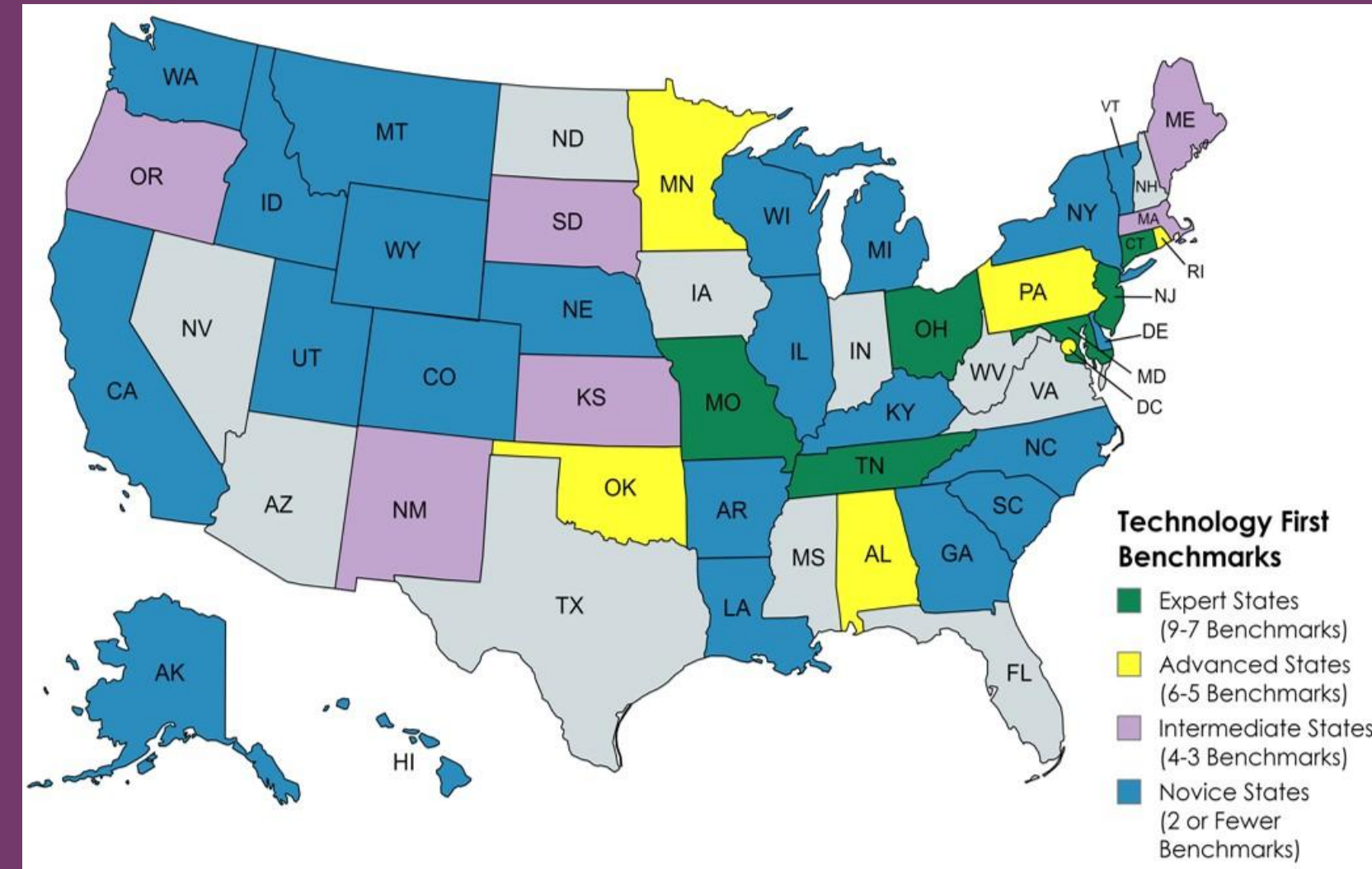
“Systems change framework where tech is considered first in the discussion of support options available to people with disabilities to promote meaningful participation, social inclusion, self-determination and quality of life” (E.S., Tanis, 2019).

- Promotes autonomy, self-direction, and community engagement
- Shifts service delivery from reactive to proactive
- Address the direct care workforce shortages
- Drives cost efficiency

40 Developmental Disabilities State Agencies are now moving Tech First forward

Being reinforced nationally through NASDDDS and ADvancing States, who created the [Enabling Technology Engagement Network](#) (ETEN).

ETEN is connecting tech innovators, state disability, aging agencies, and CMS to address challenges and accelerate innovation, all to ensure access to technology for all.



40

The ETEN Advisory Group, consists of seven states who are leaders in the tech space: DC, Maryland, Massachusetts, Missouri, Ohio, Oklahoma, and Tennessee.

These states will chart a pathway forward to expand availability of and access to innovative enabling technology to improve outcomes for individuals supported in those states.

Evolution of DDS Support Model



Forest Haven

1925-1991: Large Institutional Setting. Closed due to poor treatment & conditions



Group Home Settings

Early 90's: Transition to smaller facility-based settings often with 24/7 staffing supports



Person-Centered & Community-Based

Late 90's-2010's: Person-Centered, inclusive community living.

Tech First

Transitioning from care, support, to tech-enabled empowerment.



DDS's journey has always been about evolution. From Forest Haven to Group Homes, and then to Community-Based grounded in person-centered thinking, each phase marked progress toward greater independence and quality of life for those we support.

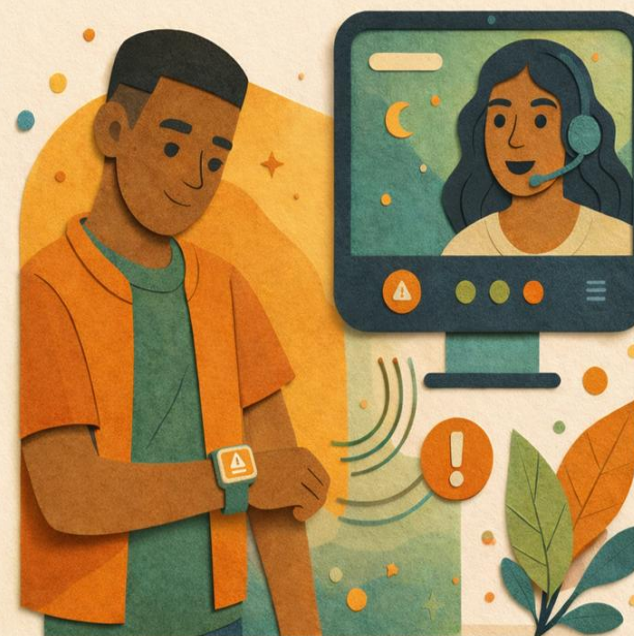
With the conclusion of the Evans lawsuit, Tech First is considered the next milestone. It builds on the foundation to empower people to live life on their own terms, using technology to enhance autonomy, safety, and quality of life.

Remote Supports (RS)



RS are a way to provide support from a distance via tech. Instead of having a DSP physically available in-person, a trained Remote Support Professionals (RSPs) provides coaching and prompting via a device that enables two-way communication.

- RSP may provide oversight of persons activity and wellness in a less intrusive manner via a dashboard connected to other solutions (e.g., sensor-based, med dispensers, wearables) leveraging alerts to go from reactive to proactive response.
- RS creates environments (home, work, community) where people can utilize tech tools to do for themselves and reach out to support staff virtually “if” or “when” support is needed, maintaining a safety net while promoting independence.



Remote Supports (RS): Empowering Independence, Not Eliminating Contact

- RS **is not** the absence of a support professional; it is support provided by more than one professional, from a distance (RS Staff & On-Call backup staff).
- RS **is** responsive in nature and **is not** continuous visual Monitoring/Surveillance.
- RS **is not** only for home supports it can also be used for job coaching, community navigation, and everyday community living (like grocery shopping).
- RS **is not** only for people who may appear to be more independent.
 - ❖ **Myth:** "High LON = not a candidate."
 - ❖ **Reality:** LON is information, not a decision.

Best practice is for the Remote Supports Service Provider to map support needs and risk areas insights in the LON to Tech and/or Remote Support Professional Strategies (Tech First Toolkit Remote Support Assessment).



Policy and Service Rollout

“What Changed & When”

1

**Remote Supports
Policy & Procedure
(October 2025)**

2

**Tech First Toolkit
(October 2025)**

3

**Waiver Amendment
(Delayed January 2026)**

4

**DDS Service Coordination
(RS and AT Training)**

This rollout reflects real groundwork DDS has been building. It gives providers and service coordinators:

- Clearer rules and expectations
- Practical tools and templates
- Updated service definitions and coverage guidance
- Support planning best practices and resources to support informed decision-making.

The goal is to make access clearer and more consistent, so Tech Tools and/or Remote Supports aren't harder to get than they need to be, and people can use them to support in experiencing life on their own terms and improve quality of life.

1

Remote Supports (RS) Policy & Procedure (October 2025)

- Makes tech and RS an expected annual conversation during planning.
- Identifies which services require a RS Assessment and Plan (Tech Plan).
- Sets clear planning and documentation expectations.
- Simplifies credentials: Provider's RS Program Lead must hold ETIS (or an approved equivalent).

Bottom Line for People Receiving Services: You will be asked on a regular basis about Tech and/or RS to achieve personal goals. If you're interested, there are clear steps and roles for who's supposed to explore these options with you.

2

Tech First Toolkit (October 2025)

- Offers clear direction and best practices for completing the RS Assessment and Plan.
- Explains Assistive Technology (AT) Services what it covers and what activities are included.
- Clarifies when an AT assessment is required and when it may not be.
- Guides providers on readiness to deliver AT and RS, including delivery model options.
- Includes videos and resources to support exploration and informed decision-making.

Bottom Line for People Receiving Services: You and your team have practical tools and examples to help you understand options, make informed choices, and put Tech and/or RS in place in a way that fits your life.

3

Waiver Amendment (Delayed January 2026)

- Reclassified what is considered “Remote Supports”(RS) vs “Telehealth” when specific services are delivered virtually to clearly separate requirements.
- Broadened Assistive Technology (AT) categories and built in flexibility to cover emerging tech.
- Credential are streamlined: ETIS is required, but provider accreditation is not. ETIS must partner with specialists when accessibility needs are a factor to ensure the tech works for the person.
- If AT Assessment is waived a Tech Plan must be completed.
- AT Services can cover subscription-based tech.

Bottom Line for People Receiving Services: Clearer, easier path to get the technology you need, with a plan for how it will work for you. It also clarifies what counts as Remote Supports, so the right rules apply.

4

DDS Service Coordination (RS and AT Training)

- SPCD will prepare service coordinators through training to consistently apply RS Policy/Procedure, Assistive Technology Services, Toolkit guidance, and Waiver updates.
- SPCD will also implement routine case reviews to strengthen AT and Remote Supports planning and authorization practices over time.

Bottom Line for People Receiving Services: SPCD is committed to understanding the groundwork to get AT and RS planning right so you’re less likely to run into delays, confusion, or inconsistent answers.

Would we still recommend Remote Supports (RS) if budget and staffing weren't an issue?

If the answer is no, then we're not being person-centered, we're being system-centered.

RS should be pursued because it fits the person's outcomes and it supports their goal to lead self-determined lives first. It being a solution to system challenges should be secondary.

It's important culturally that we stop treating RS as an "emergency backup plan" for a stressed system and start treating it as what it can be at its best: a natural support option we consider first.

A true Tech First mindset means we lead with the least restrictive, most independence building option, because it's right for the person.

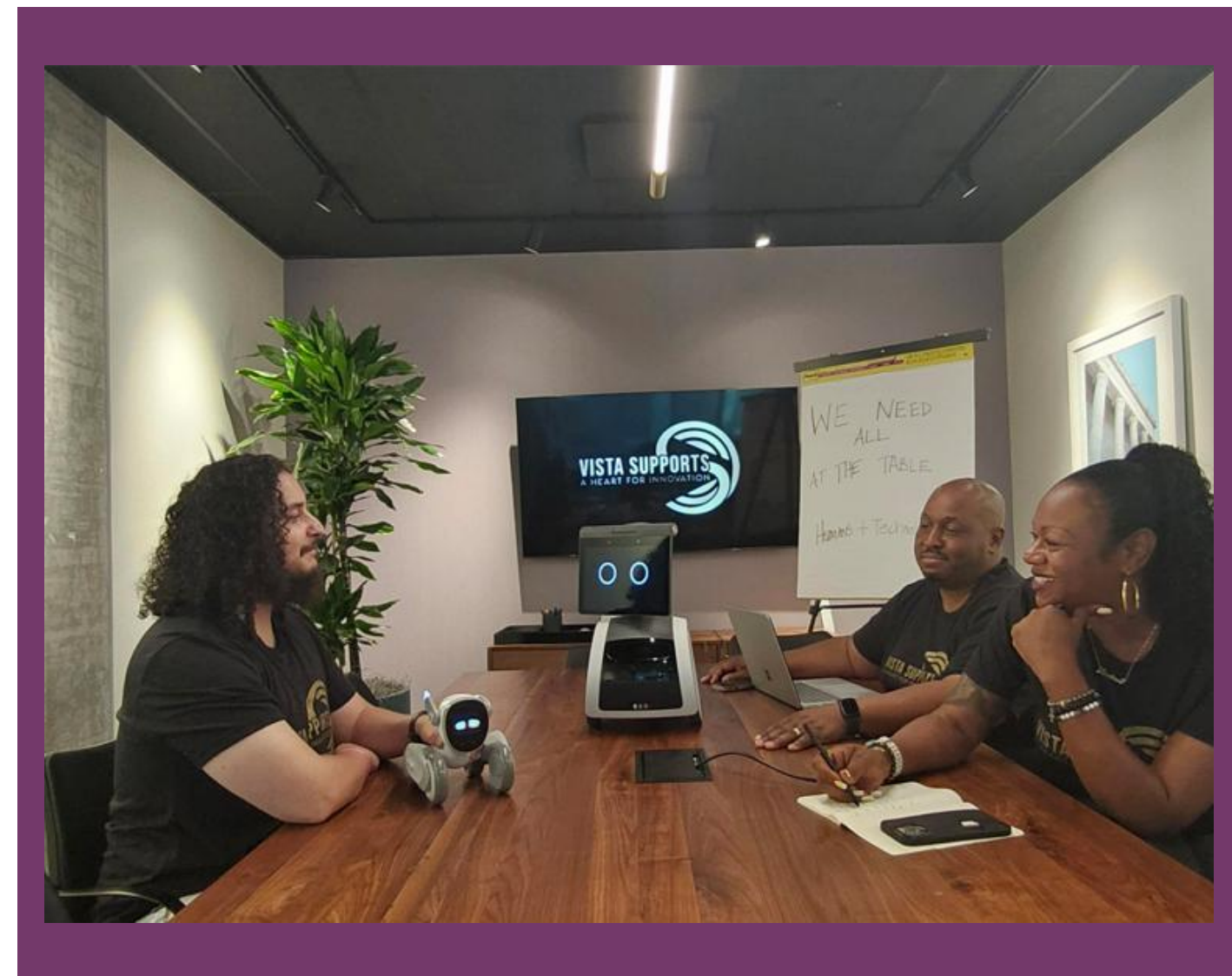
When we do that, RS becomes a thoughtful, voluntary tool that advances peoples efforts to lead self-determined lives and only then do the system benefits show up as a bonus, not the reason.



Welcome Vista Supports

You're about to get a look at the Remote Support workflow: what the remote professional is able to see across the home's technology signals, and how they translate that into personalized support and timely response when support is needed.

It's a practical glimpse into how Remote Support can extend safety and independence beyond in-person staffing.



Appreciation for Provider Engagement Remote Supports Infrastructure

Thank you to every provider who submitted a proposal in efforts to advance Remote Supports in the District. DDS faced constrained resources, which made selection decisions challenging. We congratulate the providers selected for funding to stand up Remote Supports infrastructure.

We also recognize providers who understand that modernization is a shared responsibility and who are willing to independently invest in infrastructure as part of their service model.

This was a unique, limited opportunity and should not be viewed as a standing entitlement or a routine DDS funding pathway.

