



# **Respect and People with Disabilities**

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# About the Governors Committee

- Twelve members appointed by the Governor
- Only agency that looks at disability issues from a cross-disability perspective



# Learning Objectives

- Leave with disability etiquette tips and terminology;
- Learn about “people first language” and how to work with people who may look different, have vision loss, are deaf or hard of hearing, use mobility devices, and more;
- Leave with resources to help you further interact with people with disabilities.



# Who Are People with Disabilities?

Under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) an individual with a disability is a person who:

1. has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities;
2. has a record of such an impairment; or
3. is regarded as having such an impairment.



# Who Are People with Disabilities?



- People with a sensory disability (i.e. deaf or blind).
- People with a physical disability (i.e. orthopedic or mobility)
- People with an intellectual disability (i.e. developmental or learning).
- People with hidden disabilities (emotional, cardiac, immune system, etc.).

# What is “People First Language”?

- People First is not political correctness, it is a way of emphasizing each person’s value, individuality and capabilities.
- It is a communication philosophy that eliminates stereotypes, negative assumptions and generalizations by focusing on the person rather than the disability.



THE MOST APPROPRIATE LABEL IS USUALLY THE ONE PEOPLE'S PARENTS HAVE GIVEN THEM.

# Language

Can create  
BARRIERS or  
OPPORTUNITIES  
for people

Can foster an  
epidemic of  
IGNORANCE or  
celebrate  
DIFFERENCES



# Body Language is Disability Etiquette



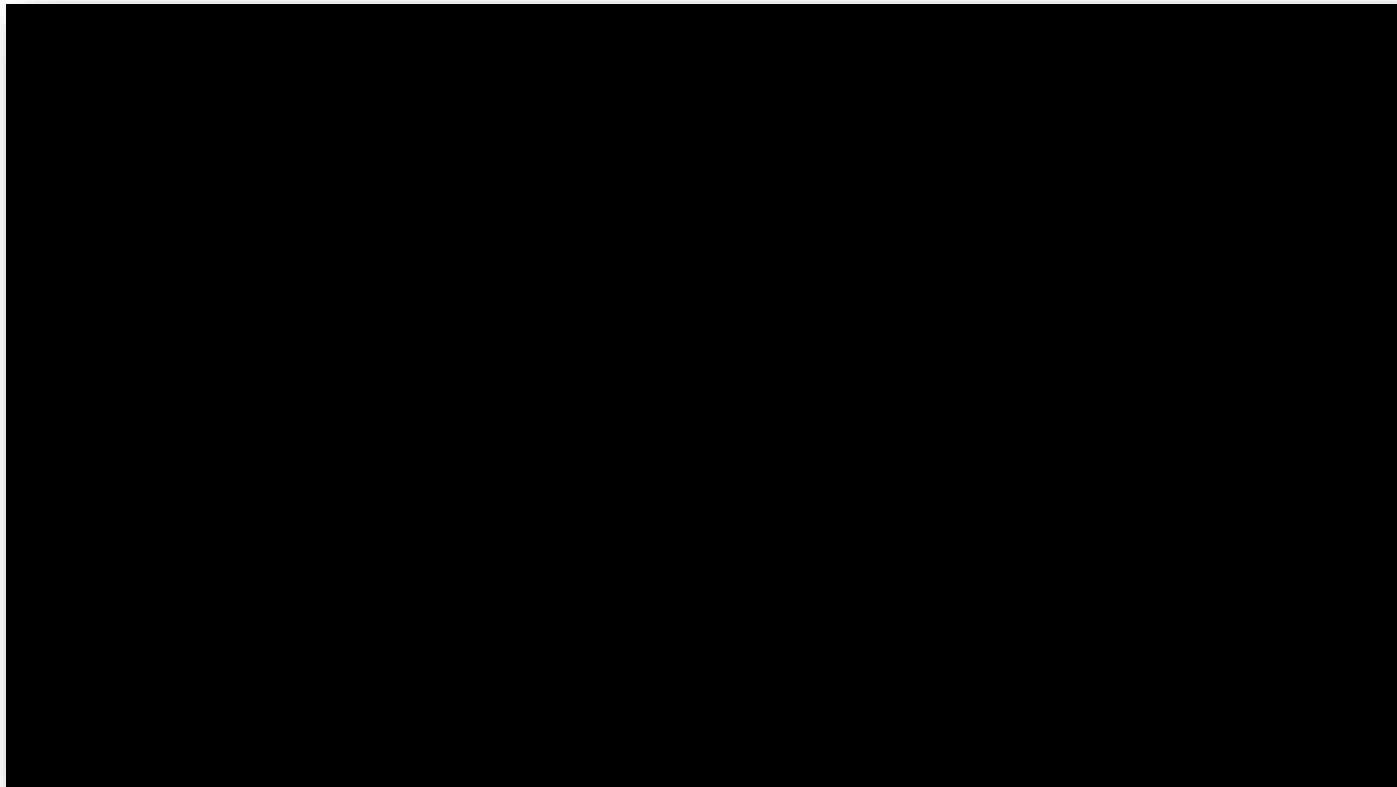
Three primary principles regarding people with disabilities:

1. They are not their disabilities.
2. They treasure their independence.
3. They are the experts.



# Interpersonal Interaction – Just Ask

- Anytime you are in an interaction with a person with a disability you already have one expert to guide the interaction. *Just “ask”.*
- Interacting with people with disabilities



# How to Replace Unacceptable Language

- Use people first language.
- Do not refer to the person's disability unless it is relevant.
- Use disability instead of handicapped.
- Don't use "normal" or "abled body," for people who do not have disabilities, use "people without disabilities."
- Avoid terms like
  - The disabled
  - The epileptic
  - The blind
  - Special schools
  - Different abled
  - Handicapped
  - Special bus

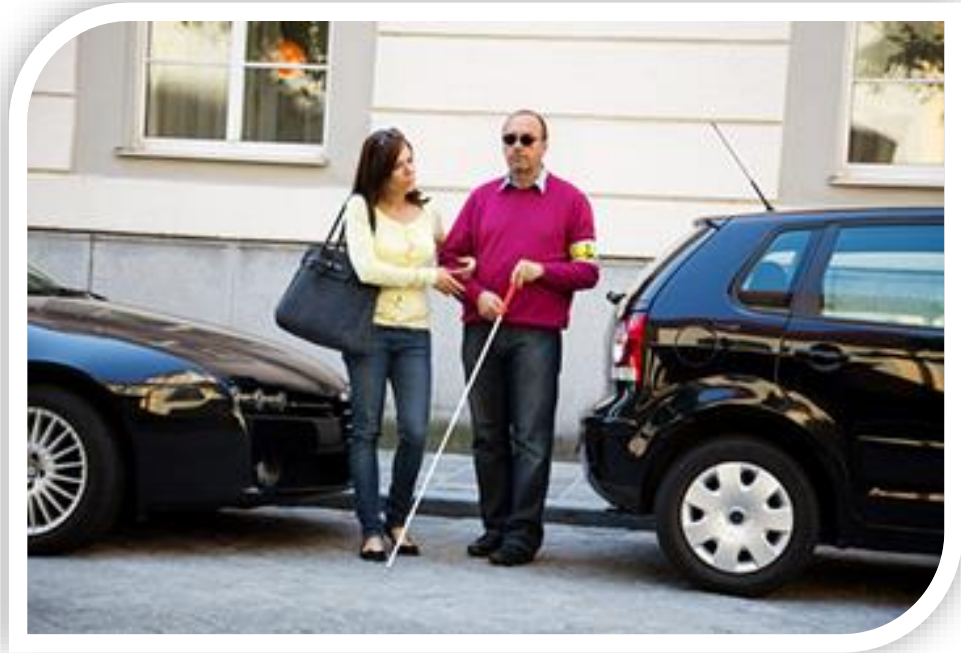
# Physical Access



- A wheelchair is part of a person's body space.
- Pushing a chair is a skill.
- Sit eye level.
- Offer assistance.
- Keep paths clear inside and outside buildings.
- Reserve Handicapped (Accessible) Parking for individuals with a placard or license tag.

# Blindness or Low Vision

- Identify yourself and others with you.
- Never touch or grab their cane or pet their service animal.
- Don't assume they need help.
- Offer your arm/elbow, and let them know you are making the offer.
- Let them know when you are leaving the room.
- Face them when you speak.



# Speech Impairment

- Allow individuals to speak.
- Seek a quiet setting.
- Don't complete their sentences.
- Listen to the person's words.
- Use a normal tone of voice.
- Don't pretend to understand if you don't.
- Ask the person how to best communicate with them instead of guessing.
- If you are not sure what you heard, repeat it back for confirmation .
- Ask the individual to repeat themselves if you still don't understand.
- If necessary, ask them if they want to use a computer to communicate.

# Intellectual Disability

- Make no assumptions.
- Allow extra time to process information, if needed.
- Use clear/simple language.
- Don't take lack of response personally, they may be overwhelmed.
- Don't take sudden emotions personally.
- Direct eye contact can be intimidating.
- Allow for different styles of processing information.



# Speaking with People who are Hard of Hearing

- First get their attention.
- Maintain a clear view of your face.
- Avoid having anything in your mouth.
- Speak clearly at a moderate rate
- Avoid noisy environments
- Rephrase when not understood.
- Just ask...



# Let's Make it Clear Video

Excerpts from Lets Make it Clear



>> Well, the doctor's running a little bit behind today

▶ ⏪ 🔊 4:30 / 9:56





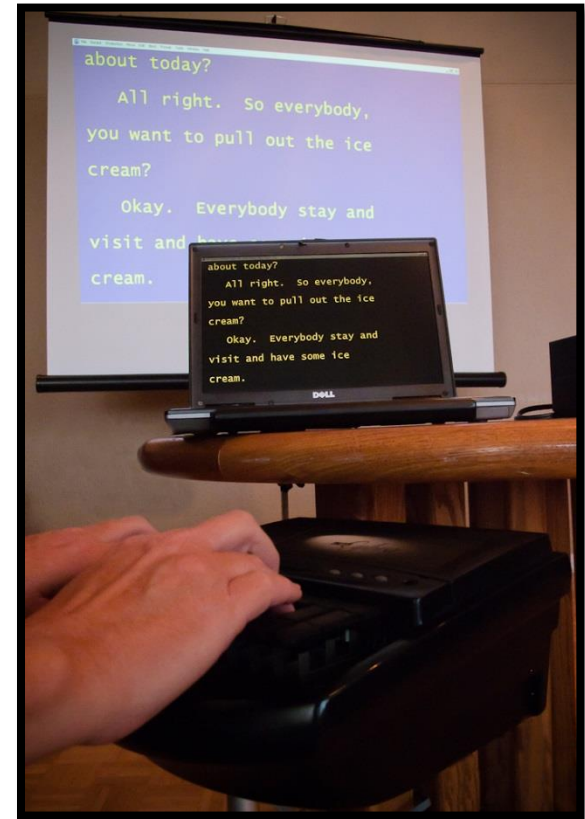
# Communicating with People who are Deaf and Use Sign Language

- American Sign Language (ASL) is not English, it is a unique language developed by people who are deaf.
- Use qualified ASL interpreters – <https://bei.hhsc.state.tx.us/PublicInterpreterSearch/Search>
- Offer note takers for staff meetings.
- Provide written materials in advance.
- Keep written language simple.
- Video Relay Service (VRS)



# Using CART

## Communication Access Real-time Translation



CART is performed by a Certified provider using a real-time translation system (a stenotype machine, notebook computer, and real-time translation software).

<https://www.tcra-online.com/index.cfm?pg=CART>

# Testing Our Understanding

## Don't use :

1. He's mentally retarded
2. The autistic
3. He's a Down's Kid
4. A victim of epilepsy
5. The mentally ill or emotionally disturbed
6. A person who is wheelchair bound

## Instead use:

1. He has an intellectual disability.
2. A person with autism
3. A person who has Down Syndrome.
4. A person who has epilepsy
5. A person with mental illness.
6. A person who uses a wheelchair

# Accessibility is Good Customer Service

people with disabilities can

- Access the same information
- receive the same services
- operate the same functionality and
- achieve the same goals

As people without disabilities



# Make Virtual Meetings Accessible

- Accessible platforms
  - Zoom or Teams
- Spotlight interpreters
- Captioning
- Audio description
  - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mJkETHCl4LQ&t=1s>



# Giving Accessible Presentations



- Plan ahead to meet the needs of all audience members
- Ask in the meeting invitation for participant's accommodation needs
- Ensure that the presentation environment is accessible
- Prepare and share accessible materials
- Deliver your content like a pro

Quick Reference at:

<http://accessibility.hhs.texas.gov/docs/guidelines/AccessiblePresentationsQuickReferenceGuide.pdf>

# The Indispensable Truth of Accessibility

*For most people technology makes things easier. For people with disabilities, technology makes things possible.*

Mary Pat Radabaugh, former IBM employee.

Assistive technology creates opportunities for people with disabilities to have equal access to your information, services, and employment ... but only when you do your part.



# Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.1

- Created by the World Wide Web Consortium's Web Accessibility Initiative
- Platform and technology neutral
- International Standard
- Used by the U.S. Department of Justice and State of Texas.
- Learn more at:  
<https://www.w3.org/standards/webdesign/accessibility>





# Resources

- Texas Governor's Committee Key Laws
  - <http://gov.texas.gov/disabilities/resources>
- People First Respectful Language
  - <https://hhs.texas.gov/sites/default/files//documents/doin-g-business-with-hhs/provider-portal/QMP/respectfullanguage.pdf>
- Tips On Interacting With People With Disabilities
  - <https://hhs.texas.gov/sites/default/files//documents/doin-g-business-with-hhs/provider-portal/QMP/disability-etiquette.pdf>
- Electronic and Information Resources (EIR) Accessibility Training:
  - <http://accessibility.hhs.texas.gov/training.asp>

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