

Western Massachusetts
Department of Homeland
Security
December 11, 2019









“A person who is severely impaired never knows his hidden sources of strength until he is treated like a normal human being and encouraged to shape his own life.”



Disability Awareness

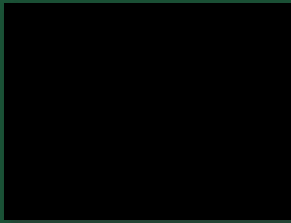
Disability awareness helps “to remove barriers so that responsible, self-sufficient people with disabilities can assume risks, make choices and contribute as they wish... this is a vision in which we all win.”



Cultural Awareness & Diversity

- Race
- Ethnicity
- Religion
- Culture
- Gender
- Generational
- Sexual Orientation
- Disability
- Intersectionality





“Not Acceptable” PSA

(Produced by Spread the Word Campaign, Special Olympics)



Intersectionality

A concept often used in critical theories to describe the ways in which oppressive institutions (racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, ableism, xenophobia, classism, etc.) are interconnected and cannot be examined separately from one another.



Racism – The King Center

Racism – prejudice, apartheid, ethnic conflict, anti-Semitism, sexism, colonialism, homophobia, ageism, discrimination against disabled groups, stereotypes...

“Racism is a philosophy based on a contempt for life. It is the arrogant assertion that one race is the center of value and object of devotion, before which other races must kneel in submission. It is the absurd dogma that one race is responsible for all the progress of history and alone can assure the progress of the future. Racism is total estrangement. It separates not only bodies, but minds and spirits. Inevitably it descends to inflicting spiritual and physical homicide upon the out-group.”



Police Department Expands Training to include Disability Awareness in Basic Course



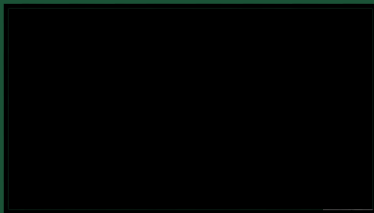
ADAPT

ADAPT is a national grass-roots community that organizes disability rights activists to engage in nonviolent direct action, including civil disobedience, to assure the civil and human rights of people with disabilities to live in freedom

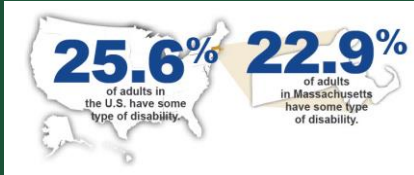
www.adapt.org



ADAPT



Statistics



CDC - Center for Disease Control



Statistics

Massachusetts Residents by Disability Category (ages 18-64 living in the community)

Disability Category	# of MA Residents	% of MA Residents	% of Disabled in MA
Cognitive Disability	197,476	4.6%	50.5%
Ambulatory Disability	165,836	3.9%	42.4%
Independent Living Disability	145,714	3.4%	37.3%
Self-Care Disability	65,131	1.5%	17.0%
Hearing Disability	70,831	1.6%	18.1%
Vision Disability	64,211	1.5%	16.4%



Numbers

- Intellectual Disability: 2-3% of population (7M)
- Cerebral palsy: 1.1M Americans
- 6.4M American children with ADHD
- 6.6M Americans with visual impairment
- 28M with hearing loss
- 3.2M wheelchair users
- 30.6M have difficulty walking
- 5.3M Americans with TBI
- 18% of the American population with a MH disorder
- Autism: 1 in 59 children (1.4M)



Definitions

Disability: any physical or mental condition that substantially limits one or more **major life activities**

Source: Americans with Disabilities Act, 1990



Major Life Activities

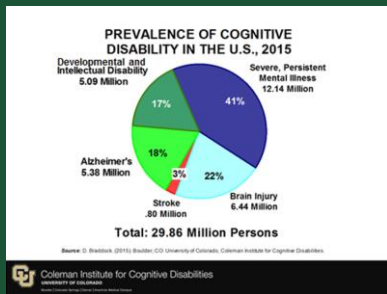
- Caring for oneself
- Performing manual tasks
- Walking
- Seeing
- Hearing
- Speaking
- Breathing
- Learning
- Working
- Sitting
- Standing
- Lifting
- Reaching



How Do Disabilities Present

1. Obvious: individuals who use a wheelchair, individuals who have certain outward characteristics
2. Non-obvious/hidden: disability is not visually evident until discussion becomes more involved, response is unusual, person identifies, or it is manifested
3. Evident shortly after encounter by discussion, appearance or response





Comorbidity

Refers to two disabilities that may be evident in an individual but not necessarily because an individual has one or the other.

Individual will have two disabilities that have a relationship:

- Cerebral palsy & seizure disorder
- ADHD & learning disability
- Anxiety & depression



Definitions

- Emotional Disability/Mental Illness
- Physical Disability
- Learning Disability
- Intellectual Disabilities
- Sensory Disability
- Developmental Disabilities



Working With People With Disabilities



Communication Barriers

Barriers in communication is one of the main issues in emergency response.

How prepared are you to communicate with someone who does not verbalize in English?

- Modes of communication
- Receptive/Expressive language
- Clarity
- Understanding
- Responsiveness



Common Mental Health Disorders

Anxiety Disorders

- Include panic disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder, generalized anxiety disorder, and phobias
- Affects approximately 40 million American adults ages 18 and older
- Frequently co-occur with depressive disorders or substance abuse
- Most people with one anxiety disorder also have another anxiety disorder



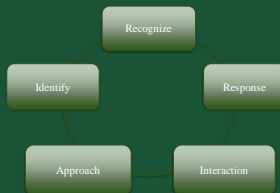
Who Needs Communication Access?

People who access communication differently:

- Seeing
- Hearing
- Speaking
- Moving
- Reading
- Learning
- Remembering
- Understanding



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Response is accurate, supporting and possibly on-going. This includes outreach to community resources, service providers, medical professionals, or other assistance

Recognize something is different, unusual, peculiar

Identify the disability

Interaction is appropriate

Approach is optimum as it relates to the individual and their disability



First and Emergency Response

- Law enforcement
- Fire Suppression/Safety
- 9-1-1 Telecommunicators
- Emergency Medical Services
- Emergency Management*



Self Preservation

- Cognitive ability to do so
- Physical limitations that challenge that
- Ignore or actually put themselves in harm's way



Outreach

Persons with disabilities must connect with the first responders so as to completely understand the way they support the disability community

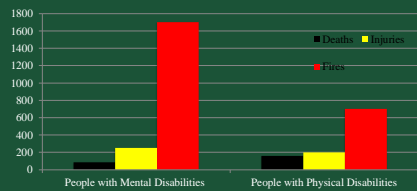


How First Responders Outreach

- Go to classes and day programs of students/adults with disabilities, in uniform with gear
- Work with Emergency Management – registry built into fire control?
- Open houses that encourage the disability community to attend
- Work with your municipality's ADA coordinator
- Establish a relationship with service providers



Residential Fires Involving Individuals with Disabilities



NOT an Information Brochure



National Fire Protection Assn

- Notification (What is an emergency?)
- Way finding (Where is the way out?)
- Use of the way
- Assistance (What kind of assistance might I need?)



Emergency Medical Services

- Trained in only certain aspects of specific disabilities
- Response to medical intervention
- Mandated reporter



9-1-1 Operations

- Operator/dispatcher
- Speech disabilities/challenges
- Making a call
- National Emergency Numbers Assn
- International Assn of Emergency Dispatch



Training Intentions

- Versed in speech disabilities, exposure that conditions the telecommunicator
- Recognition into identification of disabilities
- What to say/ask
- Interface with the dispatched first responders
- Federal law and telecommunications specific to individuals with disabilities
- The initiation of a proper response



What telecommunicators want you to know

- Open lines of communication
- Lots of questions but intended to help you
- Intellectual Disability/Autism Protocol
- You don't have to say anything
- They don't know what happens to callers
- They don't care why it happened
- Most calls are not emergencies
- Prefer a land line





Why Law Enforcement Needs This Training

- 50-80% of an officer's encounters are with a person with a disability
- Officer's lack of awareness has led to department's being sued, bad public relations, and unwarranted arrest or even death of an individual
- The person with a disability is 7 times more likely to be the victim of a crime

Source: Department of Justice (2006)



Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

- The civil rights legislation for individuals with disabilities “clear and comprehensive national mandate for the elimination of discrimination against individuals with disabilities”
- Applies to virtually every entity in the U.S., regardless of federal funding (churches and private clubs exempt)



Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

As a municipal employee, you are covered under Title II of the ADA and you have responsibilities you must understand and adhere to.

Failure to do so will expose your entire municipality to complaints and possible citations under the Department of Justice (DOJ).



ADA Compliance

- Receiving citizen complaints
- Interrogating witnesses
- Arresting, booking, and holding suspects
- Operating 911 centers
- Providing emergency medical services
- Enforcing laws

“The ADA affects virtually everything that officers and deputies do.” – US DOJ



Project Civic Access

Fact Sheet

Cities and Counties (and towns and villages): Solving
Common ADA Problems

Toolkit for State and Local Governments

[Project Civic Access](#)



Encounters

- Victim of a crime
- Offender
- Runaway from residence
- “Confused citizen”
- Medical emergency
- Witness
- Domestic violence/abused
- Caregiver request for assistance
- Group homes, service provider agencies
- Public transportation



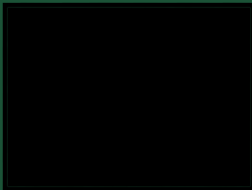


Texas Fight Club





JF Stephens



Disabilities

- Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities
- Tourette Syndrome
- Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Learning Disability
- ADHD
- Acquired/Traumatic Brain Injury
- Epilepsy/Seizure Disorder
- Physical Disabilities
- Blind/Low Vision
- Deaf/Hard of Hearing
- Dementia/Alzheimer's Disease
- Mental Health Disorders



Agencies/Community Resources

- Independent Living Centers (ILC)
- Local Office of Aging
- State/regional associations (ARC, UCP)
- (DD) Service providers/agencies
- Local Office of the Disabled
- Mental Health providers
- Schools especially those that serve students with disabilities
- National Federation for the Blind
- National Technical Institute for the Deaf
- And Many More



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Niagara University Disability Awareness Training

- Website: frdat.niagara.edu – links, community resources, training info
- Office phone: 716-286-7355
- One stop disability information center
- Offer law enforcement, firefighter, emergency medical services, emergency mgmt, and 9-1-1 telecommunicators training



INJUSTICE ANYWHERE IS A THREAT TO JUSTICE EVERYWHERE. WE ARE
CAUGHT IN AN INESCAPABLE NETWORK OF MUTUALITY. TIED IN
A SINGLE GARMENT OF DESTINY. WHATEVER AFFECTS
ONE DIRECTLY, AFFECTS ALL INDIRECTLY.