

Developmental Disability



**Social Work
Education
Consortium
West Virginia
2005-2006**



What is disability?

**A complex interaction
between a person
and his/her
environment.**





Definitions of Disability--ADA

- **The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal civil rights law that prohibits employment discrimination against "qualified individuals with disabilities."**
- **Determining who is a "qualified individual with a disability" is a complicated process. Under the ADA an individual has a disability and is protected by the law if he or she has an "impairment" that "substantially limits" one or more "major life activities."**



Definitions of Disability-- IDEA

- **The IDEA lists 13 separate categories of disabilities under which children may be eligible for special education and related services. This Attachment presents the IDEA's definitions verbatim, as found in Section 300.7(b)(1)-(13).**
- **Autism, Deaf-Blindness, Deafness, Hearing Impairment, Mental Retardation, Multiple disabilities, orthopedic impairment, other health impairments, serious emotional disturbance, specific learning disability, speech or language impairment, traumatic brain injury, visual impairment.**



Definitions of Disability- Social Security

"Disability under Social Security is based on your inability to work". This includes your past work (generally, work you performed for a year or longer at any time within the last 15 years) and "other work".

The social security administration's definition of disability also stipulates that an individual's disability must either have lasted, or is expected to last, one full year, or will possibly result in death.

Examples of Developmental Disabilities

- **Cerebral Palsy**
- **Epilepsy**
- **Autism and Autism Spectrum**
- **Spina Bifida**
- **Cognitive Disabilities**
- **ADHD**
- **Learning Disabilities**





Developmental Disability

A long term physical and/or mental disability that occurs before age 22 and results in substantial limitations in at least three of the following areas:

self-care, language, learning, mobility, self-direction, capacity for independent living and economic self-sufficiency.

Models of Conceptualizing Disability

- **Moral model**
- **Medical model**
- **Social role valorization**
- **Discrimination model**
- **Explanatory/legitimacy theory**







Disability Rights Movement


- **Asserts that people with disabilities are human beings with inalienable rights and that these rights can only be secured through collective political action.**
- **Arises from the realization that "whatever the social setting and whatever the disability, people with disabilities share a common experience of social oppression." Paul Longmore, historian.**

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- **In the 1800s, people with disabilities were considered meager, tragic, pitiful individuals unfit and unable to contribute to society, and were forced to enter institutions and asylums, where many spent their entire lives.**
 - **Since the mid 1900s, people with disabilities have pushed for the recognition of disability as an aspect of identity that influences the experiences of an individual, not as the sole-defining feature of a person.**
 - **The marginalization of people with disabilities continued until World War I when veterans with disabilities expected that the US government provide rehabilitation in exchange for their service to the nation.**

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- **In the 1930s the United States saw the introduction of many new advancements in technology as well as in government assistance, contributing to the self-reliance and self-sufficiency of people with disabilities.**
 - **In the 1940s and 1950s, disabled World War II veterans placed increasing pressure on government to provide them with rehabilitation and vocational training. World War II veterans made disability issues more visible to a due to the concern for the long-term welfare of young men who sacrificed their lives to secure the safety of the United States.**
 - **Despite these initial advancements people with disabilities still did not have access to public transportation, telephones, bathrooms, stores, and meaningful work.**

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- **Following on the work of the civil rights movement in the 1960s, disability advocates joined forces alongside other minority groups to demand equal treatment, equal access and equal opportunity for people with disabilities.**
 - **In the 1970s, disability rights activists lobbied Congress and marched on Washington to include civil rights language for people with disabilities into the 1972 Rehabilitation Act.**
 - **In 1973, the Rehabilitation Act was passed, and for the first time in history, civil rights of people with disabilities were protected by law.**

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- **The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) provided equal opportunity for employment within the federal government and in federally funded programs, prohibiting discrimination on the basis of either physical or mental disability.**
 - **Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act also mandated equal access to public services (such as public housing and public transportation services) to people with disabilities, and the allocation of money for vocational training.**
 - **In 1975, the Education for All Handicapped Children Act was passed to guarantee equal access to public education for children with disabilities. This act of legislation specified that every child had a right to education, and mandated the full inclusion of children with disabilities in mainstream education classes, unless a satisfactory level of education could not be achieved due to the nature of the child's disability.**

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- **This act was renamed in 1990 to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), which focused on the rights of parents to be involved in the educational decisions affecting their children. IDEA required that an Individual Education Plan (IEP) be designed with parental approval to meet the educational needs of a child with a disability.**
 - **In the 1980s, disability activists began to lobby for a consolidation of various pieces of legislation under one broad civil rights statute that would protect the rights of people with disabilities, much like the 1964 Civil Rights Act had achieved for Black Americans.**
 - **The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was passed in 1990, and ensured the equal treatment and equal access of people with disabilities to employment opportunities and to public accommodations.**



ADA

- **The Americans with Disabilities Act**
- **Its purpose is to “extend to people with disabilities civil rights similar to those now available on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex and religion through the Civil Rights Act of 1964.”**
- **It prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in:**
 - **Employment**
 - **Services of state and local government**
 - **Public accommodations**
 - **Transportation**
 - **Telecommunications**



Employment

- **The ADA prohibits discrimination against a qualified individual with a disability in employment and includes specific features related to reasonable accommodation, qualification standards and other labor-management issues. Reasonable accommodations refer to those that do not impose “undue hardship” on the employer.**
- **ADA requires equal opportunity in selection, testing and hiring of qualified applicants with disabilities. Also in promotion and benefits.**



Public Services

- **The ADA addresses services and activities of state and local governments including public transportation. Transportation provisions of the ADA are intended to improve access in equipment (buses, rail coaches), facilities, and demand-response systems. Some of there requirements include: the purchase of new accessible public transportation equipment, special transportation services that are comparable to fixed-route services, modification of key existing facilities to assure access, and inter-city and commuter-rail-accessibility improvements.**



Public Accommodations

- **The ADA addresses public accommodations and businesses and services operated by private entities. Privately owned transportation is also included. Specific features of the Act vary from section to section laying out how equal access is to be achieved by particular entities.**



Telecommunications

- **The ADA mandates that telecommunications relay services be offered by private companies and includes services operated by states be available to hearing-impaired and speech-impaired individuals.**



Disability Culture

- **Culture can be loosely defined as “a way of thinking, feeling and believing--a stored knowledge that guide’s people’s lives.” (Epstein, 1973; Milner, 1992; Storey, 1993)**
- **Culture influences society’s expectations about how people should act. (Milner, 1992; Storey, 1993)**



People First Language

- **Placing the person (i.e. person with a disability or person without a disability rather than disabled person or able-bodied/non-disabled person) first – a person is not defined by disability label.**



Disability: Census Data

- **51.2 million people (18.1%) of the population has some level of disability**
- **32.5 million (11.5%) have severe disability**
- **Ages 15+ 2.7 million use wheelchair while 9.1 million use other ambulatory aid**
- **Ages 15+ 7.9 million visual difficulty including 1.8 million unable to see**
- **Ages 15+ 7.8 million hearing difficulty with 1 million unable to hear**



Census Data

- **Cognitive, mental, emotional issues that interfere with daily living (excludes those living in institutions):**
 - **6.4 % of population (14.3 million)**
 - **7.9 million with one or more condition (LD, MR, Alzheimers, senility, dementia, other)**
 - **7.9 million with one or more symptoms that interfere with daily living (depression, anxiety, etc.)**

Census Data

- Poverty rates for people 25 to 64 with no disability: 7.7%
- Poverty rates for people 25 to 64 with non-severe disability: 11.2%
- Poverty rates for people 25 to 64 with severe disabilities: 25.9%





Images of People with Disabilities

- **What images do we see in newsprint, on television, movies, etc?**
- **What assumptions, attitudes, stereotypes, or values are communicated in these images?**



Common Stereotypes of the Disabled

- **Deviant: institutionalized**
- **Objects of pity: Fundraising, like Jerry's kids**
- **Threat to society: Keep group homes out of our neighborhood**
- **Sick: Made to be dependent, denied opportunities**
- **Perpetual children: Down's syndrome**
- **Incompetent: Speaking as though they aren't there**
- **Cursed: Disability results from sin of person/parents**
- **Gift from God: assign spiritual meaning to disability**
- **Freaks: dehumanized as objects of curiosity**



Social Work Practice

- **Macro**
- **Mezzo**
- **Micro**

Values and Attitudes

- **Self-determination**
- **Social and Economic Justice**
- **Non-discrimination**
- **Respect for diversity**





Professional Models of Assistance

(Mackelprang & Salsgiver, 1999, p. 12)

Model	View of Disability	Expectation of Disabled Person
Medical	Illness, sickness	Passive recipient of treatment(s)
Mental Health	Mental illness, personality deficit	Passive recipient of treatment
Vocational	Unemployability due to personal problems	Follow vocational plans
Educational	Learning, attention &/or behavioral deficits	Remedial learning and improving behavior
Social Service	Social service supports	Being compliant and remaining eligible