

Accessibility Definitions and Resources



Mobility disabilities refer to a broad range of disabilities that include orthopedic, neuromuscular, cardiovascular, and pulmonary. People can be born with a disability or it can be the result of an injury, or illness. Disabilities can be permanent or temporary, seen or unseen. People may use assistive equipment such as wheelchairs, crutches, canes, and prosthetics to obtain mobility. Others may have disabilities that are not visible such as pulmonary disease, respiratory or epilepsy.



Visual disabilities include partially sighted, low vision, legally blind and totally blind. Low vision applies to all people with sight who are unable to read the newspaper at a normal viewing distance, even with the aid of eyeglasses or contact lenses and they may require adaptations in lighting or the size of print. A Legally blind person has less than 20/20 vision in the better eye or a very limited field of vision; and Totally blind people learn via braille or other non-visual media.

American Foundation for the Blind, 11 Penn Plaza, Suite 300, New York, NY 1000. (800) AFBLIND (Toll Free Hotline). For publications, call: (800) 232-3044. Email: afbinfo@afb.net. Web: www.afb.org/services.asp



Hearing loss and deafness affect individuals of all ages and may occur at any time from infancy through old age. Hearing loss is generally described as slight, mild, moderate, severe, or profound, depending upon how well a person can hear the intensities or frequencies most greatly associated with speech. People with hearing loss use oral or manual means of communication or a combination of the two. Oral communication includes speech, lip reading and the use of residual hearing. Manual communication involves signs and finger spelling.

National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders, 31 Center Drive, MSC 2320, Bethesda, MD USA 20892-2320. Web: [National Institutes of Health](http://NationalInstitutesofHealth)



Speech disabilities refer to difficulties producing speech sounds or problems with voice quality. They might be characterized by an interruption in the flow or rhythm of speech, such as stuttering. Speech disabilities involve the way sounds are formed or with the pitch, volume or quality of the voice. People with speech disorders have trouble using some speech sounds, which can also be a symptom of a delay. Listeners may have trouble understanding what someone with a speech disability is trying to say.

American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA), 10801 Rockville Pike, Rockville, MD 20852. Telephone: (301) 897-5700 (Voice or TT); (800) 638-8255 Email: actioncenter@asha.org Web: www.asha.org

Learning disability is a general term that describes specific kinds of learning problems. A learning disability can cause a person to have trouble learning and using certain skills. The skills most often affected are: reading, writing, listening, speaking, reasoning, and doing math. Learning disabilities are caused by differences in how a person's brain works and how it processes information. People with learning disabilities are not "dumb or lazy". They usually have average or above average intelligence. Their brains process information differently.

Learning Disabilities Association of America (LDA), 4156 Library Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15234-1349. Telephone: (888) 300-6710; (412) 341-1515. Email: info@ldaamerica.org Web: www.ldanatl.org

A **Developmental Disability** is a chronic, often lifelong disability that is characterized by limitations in several major life activities such as: self-care, receptive and expressive language, learning, mobility, self-direction, the capacity for independent living, and economic self-sufficiency. This disability originates before the age of 18 and is due to mental retardation, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, or autism. About 87% of people with mental retardation will only be a little slower than average in learning new information and skills.

American Association on Mental Retardation (AAMR), 444 North Capitol Street NW, Suite 846, Washington, DC 20001. Telephone: (202) 387-1968; (800) 424-3688 (outside DC) Web: www.aamr.org

For more information visit our web site at www.wvculture.org or call 304/558-0240, ext. 145.

To download full set of Disability Access Symbols visit the NEA web site at www.arts.endow.gov